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SOCCER

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Luke Roodenburg (left) of Parramatta Powers evades the tackles of a South Melbourne defender.

Olympic Says 'No' But ... 'Yes' ... To Leeds United

By John Economos

Sydney Olympic's four 'White Knights', (51% majority shareholders of the Sydney Club), have repeatedly rejected takeover approaches made to them by England Premier League side, Leeds United.

Chairman of Leeds United, Mr Peter Risdale, toured Australia last January to have preliminary talks with five clubs in the NSL before finally narrowing his target down to just two clubs.

The Brisbane Strikers and Olympic remained on Leeds' wish-list with great preference shown towards Olympic.

However Olympic's Chief, Mr Nick Politis, after having met Risdale over a long luncheon, informed the Man from Yorkshire on more than one occasion that "Olympic is not for sale, at any price."

However in recent weeks it's been understood that three of the four 'White Knights', (all super-rich Sydney businessmen), have mellowed in their reluctance towards a Leeds buy-in.

One of the 'White Knights' stated to ABSW last night: "Look, later this week we are all going to have another meeting over this Leeds affair.

"What has now been suggested between us, is that we may consider selling to Leeds a 50% only, of the 51% we now control of Olympic.

"It appears that Leeds is still extra keen, but wish that they takeover the complete management of the Club as well, plus are prepared to inject further working capital into the exercise," ended the 'White Knight'.

A final decision is expected by next Monday night.

Nick Politis, Sydney Olympic's Chief, of the four 'White Knights', seen here with the Club's captain and sweeper, Ante Juric.

The Pride Crashes

By John Economos

JUST as the smoke was slowly but surely starting to clear, following the collapse and complete debacle of Carlton last December, late yesterday, (Monday), afternoon, more smoke came wafting out of the offices at Soccer Australia.

An official communique fired out by Soccer Australia in the afternoon, heralded that the ill-fated and totally cash-strapped Easter Pride, was all but ready to fall over and drop out of the League.

What a horrendous season this has been.

Seven rounds into the League, Carlton fell over and dropped out of the NSL due to its huge financial dire straits.

Now with just eight Rounds left to play, another club has fallen on the track.

Soccer Australia yesterday reluctantly announced that the Eastern Pride had just been stripped of all of its League (16), points due to unpaid affiliation fees due to the League.

Soccer Australia has also blocked the Pride's path from competing for any further League points, unless of course the monies in arrears are paid in full.

And that's almost certainly highly unlikely.

As well, the national governing body has stipulated that all previous results of National League matches played to date this season that have involved the Eastern Pride, will stand.

All the goals scored for, and against, will stand as well, the only difference being is that the Eastern Pride has now been stripped of all its League points.

Jeff Hopkins: The Pride's Innocent Casualty Coach.

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25-man Joeys squad get summons

National Youth Coach Angie Postecoglou, hot on the heels of guiding Australia's Under-20s through to theWorld Youth Cup, is set to do it all again with the U-17 Joeys, early next month.

The Australian Under-17s, who won their group at the first round of Oceania Qualifiers in December last year, and in the process notched up a new world record scoreline of 30-0 against American Samoa, will now face the winner of Group 2, being played in Vanuatu this week, to determine Oceania's Representative at the FIFA Under-17 World Youth Championship, to be played in Trinidad & Tobago in September this year.

Postecoglou has now named a squad of 25 players to go into camp at the AIS in Canberra from March 19, with two warm-up matches against Japan for March 24 and March 27.

Following those two practice games, the squad for the two-legged Oceania play-offs, which will be played in early April, will be reduced to 20.

Jay Lucas: Invited.

Brett Holman: Invited.

THE 25-MAN JOEYS SQUAD

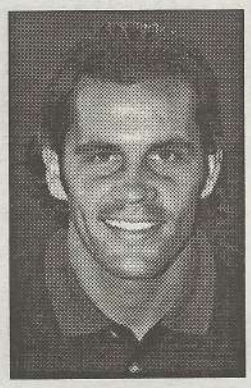
Goalkeepers
Nathan COE - AIS
Jacob REX - Northern Spirit

Defenders
Predrag BOJIC - Parramatta Power
Spase DILEVSKI - VIS
Matthew HUNTER - Northern Spirit
Rodney MADIGAN - Marconi Stallions
Brett STUDMAN - NSWIS
Adam VAN DOMMELLE - SASI
Alex WILKINSON - Northern Spirit

Midfielders
Frederick AGIUS - Adel City Force
Steven BAVEAS - NSWIS
Michael BROWN - Parramatta Power
Anthony DANZE - AIS/Perth Glory
Mario KARLOVIC - Adel City Force
Massimo MURDOCCA - South Melb
Nick STAVROULAKIS - NSWIS
Ben STEVENS - QAS
Carl VALERI - AIS
Russell WALLER - SASI

Strikers
Matthew ENGELE - AIS/Northern Spirit
Brett HOLMAN - Parramatta Power
Jay LUCAS - Wollongong Wolves
Steven MANCHEVSKI - South Melb
Terry SMITH - AIS
Sean WALSH - AIS

Phillips' injury frustrations mount



Marcus Phillips

By Graham Cooke

After weeks of frustration, midfielder Marcus Phillips now admits it will take a 'miracle cure' if he is to add to the eight appearances he has made in the Canberra Cosmos colours this season.

"There doesn't appear to be any answers," he says of the run of injuries which have plagued him since November. "If I knew how long I would be out at least I would have a target to aim for, but at the moment it's all confusion."

His problems began in the away fixture with Parramatta Power where he strained his groin. "I missed about three weeks, then came back in the match with Sydney United," he said.

"The next week I turned my ankle over in training, and the following week, when I was pushing myself to get back to full fitness, I did my groin again.

"Then in my comeback game against Auckland on December 30 I felt something rip in my stomach, and it was a hernia. The doctors have since told me it could be related to the groin problem."

An operation last month was not successful, now he faces more tests.

"I'm determined to get this right, and I will be patient," he said. "This season looks like a write-off and I certainly don't want to do anything that will ruin my chances next season."

He hopes that will be with the Canberra Cosmos. "Injuries aside I've enjoyed my time down here," he said. "They are a great bunch of lads, and I would love an opportunity of being fully fit and showing what I can do for the club."

His plan for the off-season is to join his soccer coach brother in Florida 'where I can help him, get a bit of sun and work on my fitness.'

Horvat's overseas dilemma deepens

By Roy Hay

Geelong's Socceroo sweeper Steve Horvat has to make a critical decision about his Soccer career within the next week.

He has offers from Utrecht in the Dutch First Division and from San Jose in the National Soccer League in the United States and is currently working on the details of both proposals.

The United States season starts next month, so if he is to go there he has to decide almost immediately, while the Utrecht contract would begin during the Northern Hemisphere summer break allowing Horvat to do a full preseason with the club and start playing in August.

Having played for the Socceroos in the recent match against Colombia in Bogota, following trials in Holland, Horvat then flew direct to Los Angeles and then on to San Jose.

What makes the decision crucial for Horvat, who turns 30 next week, is that a two-year stint in the USA might jeopardise his Socceroo career and almost certainly rule out of playing in Europe at the highest level.

If he turns down a lucrative contract in the USA, then he will be much more visible at Utrecht, as the Dutch league is one of the bestin Europe, and once inside the European Union then he can take advantage of the greater freedom of movement for soccer players there.

"It is a complex situation," he said last night, "I will speak to Frank Farina (the Socceroo coach) about his plans for the national team. I have the feeling that something will happen to make the decision. My wife Tina would not mind either move. Obviously being in Europe we would be closer to Croatia and her family, but it is a very even call."

Meanwhile Horvat will continue to play for Melbourne Knights on his game-by-game contract which allows him to move at any time.

"Perhaps you can win another NSL title," I suggested and his response was interesting.

"Wollongong Wolves are the strongest team at the moment. I just wonder about South Melbourne," he said.

Horvat won an NSL title with the Knights in 1995, taking the Marston Medal as player of the grand final in a team which included Mark Viduka.

Steve Horvat: Time to make a decision.

Merrylands SFC clocks 30

By Joe Luciani

The 2001 Season is our 30th year since incorporated as the Merrylands Soccer Football club in 1972, and we will be fielding some 27 teams (over 400 players) these being U/6x4, U/17x2, U/8, U/9, U/10, U/11x2, U/12x2, U/13, U/14, U/16x2, U/16 Girls, U/17, U/21, AA Ladies, O/35x2, A/Age men x 4.

A tremendous growth spurt from the early 90s when we had seven teams to the 27 teams we have today. Our charter is to cater for Soccer in our Community for both Males & Females covering all age groups.

Our Club is part of the Granville & District Soccer Football Association that has over 8,000 registered players. Our three playing fields are situated at Merrylands Park corner of Burnett St & Merrylands Road.

For the upcoming season we have added to our committee a coaching coordinator and an IT coordinator, we found that these two positions are every important in our changing environment.

With the inclusion of an NSL team in our area, the Parramatta Power, Soccer has gained more appeal. We have a strong connection with the Power and our juniors have gained from the experience with involvement as ball boys/girls, attending coaching clinics, training sessions etc. One of the biggest highlights for the Merrylands SFC juniors was actually having David Mitchell and Lawrie McKinna bring their newly formed team in 1999 down to our home ground to conduct their first public training session.

Following the training session the Parramatta players gave some one on one coaching to the players, an experience that will not be forgotten by all.

The centre of excellence established by Parramatta Power is an excellent stepping-stone for talented Soccer players.

Having Club Merrylands (Merryland Bowling Sporting and Recreation Club) as our Major Sponsor supporting us not only financially but supplying us a venue to hold our meetings, coaching and development classes and functions has contributed to our success.

Holroyd City Council upgraded Merrylands Park in 2000 to a Regional Park and we look forward to the improvement of our facilities to cater for our needs. With proposed funding a revamp of our change rooms, amenities, canteen and storage rooms will assist in the running of our Soccer Club.

Merrylands SFC is one of the oldest clubs in the Granville & Districts Soccer Football Association. The original club began in the late 1950s before closing down in 1965. The present club was reformed in 1972 when former first grade Soccer player Joe Grubba "kicked-off" with four teams.

During the 1980s the Club continued to grow and by this time Merrylands SFC had achieved such honours as Senior Division One champions as well as a junior side, which won the NSW champion of champions.

Merrylands SFC has been the "breeding ground of many champion players."

Players that come to mind are:

Matthew Bingley: Currently with the northern Spirit also played for Marconi, St George and had an overseas stint in Japan as a full-time professional. Has represented Australia in many Senior International matches as well as playing in the World Youth Cup in Portugal.

Aytec Genc: The current Sydney United captain also played for Parramatta Eagles and played as a professional in Malaysia. Has represented Australia at senior level at both outdoor and indoor Soccer.

Kasey Wehrmann: In action for Australia against Manchester United.

Glory's Wehrmann, Stange In War Of Words

By Richard Kreider

It was a day of turmoil at Perth Oval last Saturday night and this was even before the opening whistle had sounded, when Perth Glory and Socceroo midfielder Kasey Wehrman was sensationally dumped from the squad that played Northern Spirit after reportedly refusing to ride in the club bus with the rest of the team - from the club offices to the Oval for the match.

It also believed Wehrman kicked over a bench and had a verbal exchange with Stange as he was leaving the changerooms.

"I have to explain to my players who want to become great players that soccer is a team sport and we have rules," said Glory coach Bernd Stange. "If they don't follow them they are out, it's as simple as that,"he said. "I have no problem with Kasey or any of the other players in the team, because I have to set standards - professional standards. Kasey is one of the best midfielders in Australia, and he wants to leave overseas to play for the likes of Manchester United, PSV or some other team. But while he is at Perth Glory, he has to follow my rules," Stange said.

The Wehrman bombshell comes hot on the heels of the surprise dropping of Australian Youth International captain Ljubo Milicevic from the Spirit game, just days after returning from the successful Oceania World Youth Cup qualifiers.

"I simply decided to give him a break after a hard World Youth Cup campaign," said Stange. "I have so much experience with youngsters and I believe he will be hungry for the next game," Stange said.

Milicevic's contract expires at the end of the current season and is already being courted by a number of European clubs.

Meanwhile the up and coming Oceania World Cup qualifiers could be the ideal opportunity for Socceroo coach Frank Farina to try Glory's Bobby Despotovski and Damian Mori as a twin strike force. Both players head the NSL goalscorers leaders board with 17 goals and are in sensational form. "My main aim is to get Perth Glory in the top two," said Mori. "If I make the Australian team I'd be quite happy but at this point in time I'm really focussed on making sure Perth Glory get one of those top-two positions," he said.

"Of course I would like to play for Australia, although to tell you the truth I have never thought about it," said Despotovski. Like 'Frogger' (Mori) says, we are just concentrating on our club games first but if Frank Farina selects us then great. But if somebody else is picked than so be it," Despotovski ended.

Bernd Stange: Head Coach of Perth Glory.

DECISION DAY FOR AUSTRALIA'S W-CUP HOPES

Bert van Bedaf

"If we can't play in Australia, it will add pressure on the team and could potentially damage our chances of qualifying": Soccer Australia chairman, Tony Labbozetta.

By Bert van Bedaf

If Australia needed a reminder, soccer is a world game, and therefore affected by politics, it needs to look no farther than Fiji.

Australia's World Cup qualifying campaign is supposed to kick off in Coffs Harbour, NSW, on April 8-20, but the tournament might not go ahead on home soil.

Its Oceania group matches involve American Samoa, Tonga, Samoa - and Fiji, a political pariah in the eyes of the Australian government since a coup, led by businessman George Speight, ousted the democratically elected, multi-racial government of the then Prime-Minister Mahendra Chaudry last May.

The Australian government's position is it will not grant visas to Fijian sportsmen or women, including its soccer players, because of the Political situation in their country.

Socceroo's coach, Frank Farina

Ironically, if no visas are granted, the qualifying tournament will be moved to Fiji, robbing the Socceroos of their home advantage.

The impasse is the first major test for recently elected SA chairman Tony Labbozetta, who obviously is against surrendering home advantage.

"If we can't play in Australia, it will add pressure on the team and could potentially damage our chances of qualifying," Labbozetta said.

"It would be very disappointing if government sanctions against Fiji would be rewarding them in other ways," a concerned national coach Frank Farina said.

A government decision was expected last Friday, but developments in the South Pacific nation prompted further talks between the government, Soccer Australia and Oceania president (former SA chairman) Basil Scarcella, with a decision expected today, or later this week.

In a dramatic verdict last Friday, the Fijian Court of Appeal ruled the current post-coup government of Prime-Minister Laisenia Qarase was illegal and the Chaudry government had a legitimate claim to power.

From his self-imposed exile in India, Chaudry said, "The longer we delay (transition) the more difficult the task of rebuilding Fiji will become.

The immediate priority is to get Parliament to its former state."

But not only the Court of Appeal is presiding over Fiji's (and therefore Australia's) fate. Indigenous Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs, comprising the country's tribal leaders, is expected to bring down their verdict today, which is what has been exercising Canberra whether to grant the Fijian soccer team visas or not.

It's decision will have a major bearing on Australia's World Cup future.

The unthinkable has happened in the past. Fiji beat Australia 1-0 in a World Cup qualifier in Fiji in 1988. The Socceroos struck back 5-1 in the return leg, but the cards aren't stacked that way this time round. The tournament will decide the eventual winner. So, it's up to Downer and the federal government to give Australia home advantage.

Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister, Alexander Downer is privately known to be in favor of granting visas to give Australia the best possible opportunity of succeeding in its World Cup ambitions. Whether he can convince his cabinet colleagues of that lofty aim is as yet uncertain.

ALTONA GRABS EX-CARLTON STAR

By Bert van Bedaf

Victorian Premier League club Altona Magic signed striker John Markovski and winger Joe Tricarico for the remainder of the season.

The ex-Carlton players considered offers from various premier league clubs, including titleholder Green Gully and high-flying Heidelberg, but settled for the former triple champion, being coached by recently appointed Frank McGrellis.

Much travelled Markovski is another Magic player who's returned "home", joining striker Sash Becvinovski to lift the Magic into the top five.

Joe Tricarico is determined to resurrect his career after a crippling leg injury sidelined him for a season.

Both players were available last Saturday for the match against Fawkner, which finished nil-all.

Their signings have sparked controversy among rivals clubs. The Victorian Soccer Federation changed its rules to accommodate the signings.

"VSF regulations regarding NSL players signing for Premier League clubs have been amended following consultation with the Professional Footballers' Association," VSF chief executive Geoff Miles announced.

"Players from Victorian NSL clubs that enter (into) liquidation or whose license is revoked by Soccer Australia can now transfer into the Premier League at any time until the close of the transfer period on April 30th," he said.

Under the existing rules, St Albans was unable to sign midfielder Mark Silic from Sydney United and register him in the VPL. The rules stated that VPL clubs could sign NSL players before the season.

They could also sign NSL players during the transfer period, provided those players had not made more than four NSL appearances. Silic had made five appearances for United, the VSF determined after consulting Soccer Australia.

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

By John Economos

THE BRISBANE STRIKERS tomorrow, (Wednesday), night will play its deferred match against the League leaders South Melbourne at Ballymore.

The Strikers had this match deferred last month as they had four players absent on national duty playing in the Cook Islands in the Oceania Qualifiers with the Australian Youth squad.

Last Sunday night the Strikers at home had a solid 4-2 win over Sydney United. Highly experienced veteran marksman, Paul Foster, made a spectacular return from injury by nailing in a second half brace that denied the Sydney side a draw.

Souths last Sunday night also had a solid win, a 0-3 victory over the Parramatta Power in Sydney.

All of Souths' goals were rained in by their mobile stocky striker, Andy Vlahos.

Paul Foster: Brisbane's veteran striker, in form for the Queenslanders.

A win tomorrow night by the Melburnians will enable them to edge further away from the currently second placed Sydney Olympic.

But John Kosmina's side is certain not to be in any philanthropic mood towards his counter-part Mickey Petersen, and the Queenslanders are certain to give the Victorians a real run for their money.

●●●●

SPEAKING of Mickey Petersen, one must admire at just what a wonderful job he has done with the Victorian giants in his very first year as senior coach in the National Soccer League.

Admittedly Petersen, (himself a former Souths midfield playmaker and Australian international), inherited largely a settled squad.

Despite his young age, and the fact that many of the Souths players were his former team-mates and friends, Petersen nevertheless has been able to sustain respect, discipline and harmony within the squad.

Last Sunday whilst appearing on SBS' 'On The Ball' programme, he displayed the essential ingredient qualities that contribute to the makings of a good coach.

Petersen was relaxed, alert, very honest, concise with his answers plus totally humble.

In his first season in the 'electric chair', Petersen has continued Souths' recent policy of promoting their very own people to coach their side.

Prior to Petersen, Souths' management had upgraded their former assistant coach as well as their former international left-back, Angie Postecoglou with huge success.

Angie steered Souths to a rare back-to-back NSL championships and did exceptionally well with his side in FIFA's first World Club Championships staged in Brazil last year.

This policy of promoting staff from within the club's own ranks into the senior coaching role, was extremely successful and best illustrated when pioneered by the all-mighty Liverpool club of England from the 60s through to the late 80s.

Shankly, Paisley, Moran and Dalglish in succession, all yielded enormous glory, discipline, stability and fear, through-out Europe for Liverpool.

Getting back to Souths' young 'Mickey P', having his team at the top of the League ladder and strongly steaming ahead for his first hopeful League Championship, surely Petersen and Wollongong's Ronnie Corry already must be the two red-hot favourites to take out this year's 'Coach Of The Year' trophy.

●●●●

FUTSAL AUSTRALIA, (Indoor Soccer), has secured a $250,000 sponsorship deal from 'Tubular Systems' in a two year deal.

The entire governing body has been restructured and has been injected with a brand new management team that has pledged to drastically overhaul the game.

Already blue-printed is a Mens and Womens FIFA Tournament to be staged in Australia come July.

The current administration is pressing for Futsal to be included in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

A major airline is also expected to come into Futsal as a significant sponsor with an international touring programme.

●●●●

ANDY VLAHOS, South Melbourne's dynamic striker, scored all of his team's three goals last Sunday night in Sydney that ultimately sank the Parramatta Power 0-3.

This spectacular hat-trick lifted the stocky marksman's season tally to 10 goals, to draw level with Adrian Cervinski, Scott Chipperfield and Stuart Young.

●●●●

RONNIE CORRY, the Wollongong Wolves' Oceania Championship winning coach, must have killed a Chinaman.

Last Tuesday night in Spain, where the draw was made by FIFA for the second World Club Championships, Corry's team was drawn in the 'Group Of Death' that includes Deportivo La Coruna (Champions of Spain), Argentina side, Boca Juniors (South America's Champions), plus the Egyptian side Zamalek F.C.

As soon as the draw was made public, it's rumoured that Corry coldly remarked: "What a shame Real Madrid also didn't make it into our Group".

Wollongong's first game will be against the Egyptian team.

●●●●

RONNIE SMITH, the former Head coach at the A.I.S., has already been targetted for next season to takeover the reins of an NSL club.

'Smithy' for the past two years has been based in Kuala Lumpur as the National Technical Director of Malaysian Soccer.

It's believed that Smith's contract with the Malaysians expires this June which will see him back in Australia.

●●●●

ONE just can't help but feel extremely sorry for one Jeff Hopkins, coach of the ill-fated Eastern Pride.

The always placid and intelligent Hopkins, has had to struggle and suffer all the internal turmoils of having his players left unpaid for the past two months by his cash-strapped Club.

The former Welsh international, yesterday, (Monday), as an 'added bonus' was totally shattered when he was informed that Soccer Australia had just taken the decision to wipe out all of the Pride's (16), League points due to unpaid affiliation fees by his Club to Soccer Australia.

The Pride has also been precluded from being eligible to participate for competition points till the Club has paid the outstanding fees.

What another disaster in the NSL following on the heels of the collapsed Carlton.

Soccer Australia's action will NOT affect the results of matches involving the Pride which also means that it will not have an impact on the goals scored for or against, or on the goalscorers' charts.

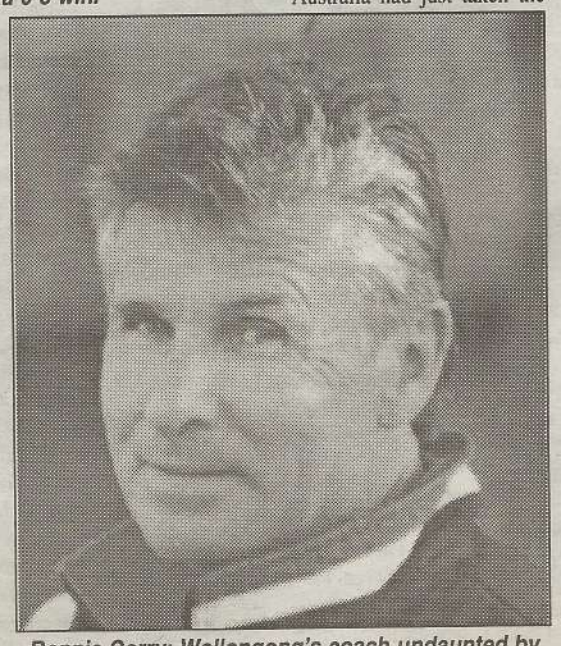
All statistics on the NSL ladder remain the same except the League points previously credited to the Pride, have now been zeroed.

Jeff Hopkins: The Eastern Pride's coach deluged by dilemmas.

Ronnie Smith: About to step into the coaching ranks of the NSL.

Andy Vlahos (right) shrugs off the Power's Ahmad Elrich in a battle for possession last Sunday night at the Parramatta Stadium. Vlahos scored a spectacular hat-trick that gave Souths a 0-3 win.

Mickey Petersen: Souths' rookie NSL coach.



Ronnie Corry: Wollongong's coach undaunted by his mega opponents.

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

PETER GRAY, the President of the NSW Soccer Federation, has set some type of record with his current position.

As of yesterday, (Monday), Mr Gray has held the State Presidency for 10 consecutive years.

Last night, a very proud, and the always jovial Mr Gray, stated to 'Good Oil':

"I have also served on the Board of Directors of the NSW Soccer Federation for 17 years, and have been very happy to do so and to serve the code."

Mr Gray is one of the very few administrators in the game today that has actually played Soccer.

He started his playing career with the Canterbury Juniors back in 1958 as a goalkeeper.

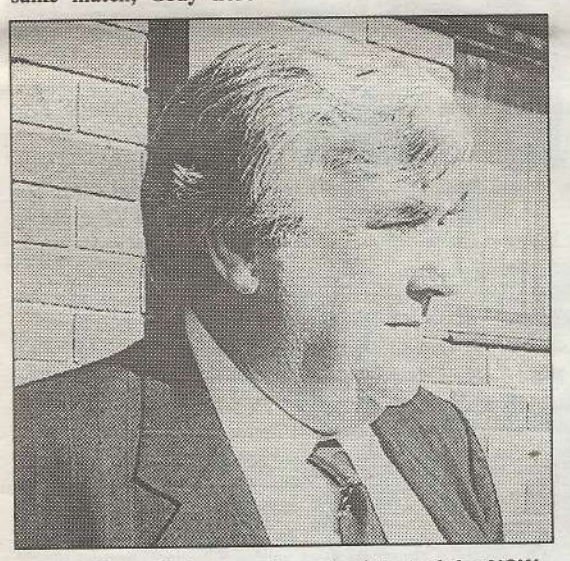
From Canterbury Gray moved to St George, then played for Apia for two years before he joined Polonia.

In 1964 whilst playing for the Corinthians, Big Peter had the misfortune to break his leg against the Austrian star-studded side, Prague.

Incredibly in that very same match, Gray heroically saved a penalty, (with his leg broken), blasted at him by the then penalty-king, striker Herbert Ninaus.

Ninaus, a former crack Austrian international, had missed only two penalties in his entire career.

Mr Gray in later years also had seasons with Melita Eagles and Sutherland.



Peter Gray: Sets record as President of the NSW Soccer Federation.

●●●●

AS we have previously announced, WORLD CUP 2002 tickets have now gone on sale.

FIFA has designed a new ticket for fans around the globe.

The new 'Team Specific Tickets' (TST), give the fans the opportunity to buy tickets to see and follow their own team all the way through to the Final, should that team ultimately qualifies.

The 2002 World Cup finals kick off on May 30th going through to the Final on June 30th.

These World Cup Finals will be jointly hosted by Japan and Korea.

There are two types of Team Specific Tickets.

a) "Conditional Series Tickets". This series gives the fan access to tickets in the FIFA World Cup final competition until his or hers team is eliminated.

b) "Fixed Series Tickets". This series extends to the fan a guaranteed ticket to all purchased rounds of the final competition, including the Final match, regardless whether his or her chosen team progresses from round to round.

Ticket application forms are accessible on-line at either :

www.FIFAworldcup.com, or

www.soccer australia.com.au, or via:

2002 FIFA World Cup Ticketing Bureau, phone 44 870 123 2002.

Fax :44 870 124 2002.

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2002 FIFA WORLD CUP KOREA JAPAN

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SYDNEY will play host to the 2001 Australian University Games, Australia's largest annual Multi-Sport Event.

The Minister for Tourism, Ms Sandra Nori, yesterday, (Monday), officially opened the Uni Games.

The Australian University Games, (which of course include Soccer), will be staged in September 1st, with many of the events to take place at Sydney—Olympic venues.

A record of some 9,000 participants from NSW, interstate as well as from overseas, are expected to attend the Games.

Newcastle will play host City for the Australian University Games in 2003.

By John Economos

CON MAKRIS, the Adelaide businessman, stated this week that his plans are well advanced for the 'South Coast Eagles' to become a significant part of the remodelled and reduced National Soccer League next season.

Mr Makris has already submitted his application to the League on behalf of the 'South Coast Eagles' with his Bank Cheque made out for $250,000 plus $10,000 affiliation fee.

Mr Makris stated: "We are negotiating with several Euro-based Australian players and naturally those negotiations will accelerate once we get the go-ahead from Soccer Australia.

"We are also in discussion with coaches and expect to make an announcement in the coming weeks," Makris ended.

It's believed that Makris' new squad is expected to number 22 players.

It's also understood that the new team, if accepted into the NSL, will play in the South Australian traditional colours of Red, Blue and Gold, the colours that are already used by the Adelaide Crows as well as the Adelaide 36ers.

Mr Con Makris: Adelaide business man.

Melbourne Knights top players Ljubo Lapskansky (left) and Andy Vargas celebrating.

'Mr Fabulous' to coach new look Victoria

By Bert van Bedaf

A tour of visiting Italian club Reggina has brought the best out of Victoria.

The Serie A club will come to Australia in June for three matches,

possibly against Marconi Stallions, Adelaide City Force and a Victorian select side.

Returned to life after 13 years of hibernation, the Victorian State team will be coached by Fabio Incantalupo, the former assistant to Stuart Munro, who coached recently-deceased NSL club, Carlton and now lives in Sydney between jobs.

The Carlton connection reaches further. One of the tour organisers is Lou Sticca, who blew life into the Carlton Soccer Club and was its general manager before the club collapsed.

Incantalupo, aka "Fabulous Fab", represented Victoria as a player during the 1980s. This will be his first senior coaching assignment. Despite having been associated with championship clubs such as the former Brunswick

United Juventus and Bulleen, Incantalupo has never found himself in charge of, for example, a Victorian Premier League team.

He won the league's Player of the Year gold medal in 1991 with Bulleen, the then runner up to Juventus for the Victorian title. His coaching abilities have never been doubted. The chance simply had not yet come his way. Now it has arrived.

"We've still got to find out the details of the tour, but there are three games scheduled for June. At this stage there's a match fixed for Marconi and against Victoria and another match probably in Adelaide. Once that third match is finalised the tour can go ahead," Incantalupo said.

"I've been given the task to select a Victorian side. This is the first time I'll be a head coach of a select side. I've represented Victoria in my younger days. To coach a select side is a great honor. Victoria has always fielded a competitive side and that's what I intend to do," he said.

"I'll be looking at premier league players and NSL players. I hope some of the NSL players will be released. I'd want to get a good mix of senior players and also young players coming through the premier league. I'll probably start with a 30-men squad and then gradually cut it down," Cantalupo unveiled his plans.

"I've seen one or two Premier League games so far, but I'll be going to see a lot more premier league matches in the coming weeks, preferably the top six teams, and I'll be speaking with a lot of coaches so that they can give me some recommendations on some players."

Having played Premier League Soccer himself, Incantalupo has a fair idea of the standard.

"The standard has dropped off a wee bit. If some NSL players can compete in the tour than the premier league players will benefit from it.

You've got to have your hardcore of five or six players in the first eleven and you mix it up with some promising youngsters," Incatalupo said.

"I was at Bulleen for a long time after I left Brunswick Juventus. I won a championship there and was voted the premier league player of the year.

There are some good players in the league.

"Danny Tiatto was coming through the ranks when I was at Bulleen and look where he's now, at (English Premier League club) Manchester City, so there's good, young talent out there. But you've got to go out there and seek it.

The new Victorian coach is keen to develop an attacking side in the style of South Melbourne, which has consistenly employed an all-out strike force under Mike Petersen.

"It good for the game. It's what soccer needs. I would want to do something like that when Reggina comes out, but it depends on what players I've got to pick from. Once I know, I'll make my decision," he said.

As far as Incantalupo's long term future goes, he might be heading for New South Wales or New Zealand.

"Since (the demise of) Carlton, a few rumors have been going around.

Stuart (Munro) has indicated to me, if he does get a senior (coaching) job he's willing to bring me on board. There are rumors going around regarding Newcastle and the Auckland Kings.

"In the next couple of weeks we'll know a bit more. Teams that won't be in the top six will be starting to think about next season. We'll find out then what the future holds," he said.

Fabio Incantalupo: Ex-Carlton assistant sweat merchant now tipped to handle the new Victorian team.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

SCOTT CHIPPERFIELD, the Wolves' illustrious striker returned from Columbia where he starred with the Socceroos.

He hopes to be part of the Oceania World Cup campaign, endangered by the Federal Government's sanctions against Fiji sporting teams.

When are the politicians in Canberra going to stay away from sports and do not drag everybody into the dirty waters of politics. Chipperfield went straight back to train with his team, no favours granted by Coach Ron Corry.

GEORGE SOURIS, the Wolves outstanding stopper, is battling injury for the first time seriously. He is being treated for back trouble, which has plagued him lately.

Hopefully the Wolves physio will be able to overcome the problem. George wants to play, having shown top form in recent matches. Coach Ron Corry will therefore be keeping a critical eye on George's recovery.

WOLVES' TRAVELLING FANS, eager to watch their team in Spain have to aim straight for La Coruna — a seaport in the north of the country, facing the Gulf of Biscay, a well-known, very-rough patch of the sea between Spain and France.

The Wolves have drawn a 'group of death' - the cream of the world's top Soccer teams. Everybody knows by now the Wolves opponents. In comparison, group B and C look easy.

However Wolves' coach Ron Corry, composed as ever, considers a surprise awaiting the Wolves' more-established opposition, even though the luck of the draw did not favour his side. The boys have nothing to lose, they may as well have a go and attack with all guns blazing.

WORLD CUP TICKETS — for the 2002 FIFA World Cup in Korea/Japan are available from 2002 FIFA World Cup Ticketing Bureau, P,O, Box 2002, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK 8 7RR, England or by fax 448701242002, phone 448701232002, EMAIL sales @ fifa-tickets.com. Application forms contain all information needed.

MATTHEW HORSLEY, skipper of the Wollongong Wolves, must be one of the most-loyal players in the NSL. He has been with the club for eleven years, coming from local club Balgownie and playing with the Wolves Youth team before making First Grade.

Wollongong's captain and motivator, Matt Horsley who has been with the club for 11 years.

At the zenith of his soccer playing years, must rate the trip to Spain later this year with his team for the World Club Championship. He is looking forward to a few more successful years playing himself and for the club. The Wolves have proven experts wrong, establishing themselves as a serious top contender. The test comes in the remaining ten matches, all of them tough and points must be earned by playing well.

THE competition has not even yet started with Coniston Lions already changing coaches. Jim Markowski, at the club for three years, is disappointed with the attitude of some players and walked out. It looks like Milche Saveski, who already was involved with first grade for some time, might take over. The Club has called a special meeting to deal with the problem.

KNOCK-OUT going since 1962, the oldest known pre-season fixture in the country, supported with many thousand dollars in 39 years by the Corrimal Leagues Club - quarter Final results from two grounds = at Memorial Park: Western Suburbs had to dig deep to overcome first division University (the only pure amateur side in the competition) 2:1, the 'students' were leading 1:0 at half time and well into the second half before West came back strong. In the second game Port Kembla defeated Kemblawarra 3:0, no score at the break, the second part was fearsome contested.

The first goal came from a long goal kick by the Port keeper, headed into his own net by an unfortunate defender, the second goal a penalty and the third a well-placed header.

At Tarrawanna Oval, Lysaghts edged out Cringila 1:0, perhaps a little bit surprising. The other game saw first division side Albion Park W.E. knocking out fancied Premier League team Balgownie in a penalty shoot-out after coming from 3:1 down, equalising 3:3, no score in extra time, shoot-out won by Albion Park W.E. 4:3, keeper "Robert Gigliotti saving twice. In the semi-finals, played at Elizabeth Park, Lysaghts plays Port Kembla and Albion Park W.E. meet Western Suburbs.

The final will be played Sunday 18/3. also at Elizabeth Park, Bellambi.

SOUTH COAST UNITED, playing at Ian McLennan Park, a very good set-up with a fine grand stand, coached by former NSL player David Skeen, is running once more the annual Austral Bricks Cup.

Besides of the home team, entered have Bulli, Cringila , Port Kembla and Western Suburbs from Premier League and Fernhill from first division. The games are played on Wednesday nights under excellent floodlights. Prize money is available with $1000.- for the winner, $300.- for second and $200 for third.

BULLI SOCCER CLUB, well-established in the ICU Premier League as a top contender, are having their season launch at the huge Woonona-Bulli RSL Club on Friday 23/3. - M.C. is Andy Paschalidis.

ICU First Division club Albion Park W.E. - a club with an enormous pool of juniors registered - hold their pre-season function at the Harbour Front Restaurant on Sunday 25/3.

ICU PREMIER LEAGUE DRAWS are out with kick-off on Saturday 31/3. - Balgownie Rangers v Wollonong Olympic, Bulli v Coniston Lions, Cringila v Picton Rangers, Northern United v Port Kembla, Western Suburbs v Shoalhaven City, Lysaghts v Kemblawarra.

Last year's competition winner Port Kembla must be seen again as strong favourite, coach Adrian Alston in his 8th season, is cagey assembling a successful squad. Second placed last season Wollongong Olympic, again with coach John Frew, have lost a few players, forced to re-build. Third placed Coniston Lions, their coach resigned, are relying on newly appointed Milche Saveski, having strengthened their side.

Fourth positioned Western Suburbs, coach Larry Gaffney in his second season, have signed several new players and have yet to prove if they can challenged for the top. Fifth placed Kemblawarra, coach John Fleming in his third term, have cleaned out a few players and are aiming to come up with a top formation.

Sixth positioned Lysaghts, a new coach in Rob Birkin, could find the going tough this year. Seventh placed Bulli, new coach Bruce Tilt, are aiming to improve on last season's low spot.

Eighth placed Northern United with new coach Ian Cirson lost several regulars and could be struggling. 9th positioned Cringila, coach Rade Stefanovski in his third season, are looking for more success, the club has spend a lot of funds on ground improvements at Crehan Park. 10th placed Shoalhaven City, coach T.B.A., could be fighting relegation threat, unless the squad is considerably strengthened.

Newly promoted Picton Rangers and Balgownie, coaches Greg Goodfellow (Picton) and Jock Morlando (Balgownie) both know what is required to compete well in Premier League.

It looks like a most entertaining Premier League competition.

Now the real test for Wollongong

The draw for the 2001 FIFA Club World Championship, to be held in Spain, has been finalised with Oceania champions Wollongong Wolves being drawn in a very tough group.

The Wolves are in **Group A** along with Boca Juniors (Argentina), Deportivo La Coruna (Spain) and, Zamalek FC (Egypt), with their matches being played in the city of La Coruna.

Wollongong will open its account against Zamalek FC on Sunday 29th July at Estadio Riazor at 5pm, followed by current Spanish champions Deportivo La Coruna on Wednesday 1st August at 7.30pm also at Estadio Riazor, with its final group match against South American giants Boca Juniors on Saturday 4th August at Estadio San Lazaro at 8.30pm (to ensure all final group matches are played simultaneously).

Group B sees Palmeiras (Brazil) joined by CD Olimpia (Honduras), Galatasaray (Turkey) and Al — Hilal (Saudi Arabia), with this group being based out of Madrid and the Estadio Vicente Calderon.

Group C action will have European champions Real Madrid (Spain) face Los Angeles Galaxy (USA), Jubilo Iwata (Japan) and Hearts of Oak (Ghana), with this group also based out of Madrid at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

Each group winner will automatically qualify for the semi-finals, with the fourth semi-finalist being the best second placed team amongst the three groups.

The semi-finals will be played on Thursday 9th August in Madrid (Estadio Santiago Bernabeu) and La Coruna (Estadio Riazor), with the final scheduled for Sunday 12th August in Madrid at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu (including the play-off for third place).

From left: George Souris, Matt Horsley and Saso Petrovski all Wollongong players celebrating a fine outing in a recent game. They all will form the nucleus of the Wollongong team to the World Club Championship.

Birkalla lifts SA Summer Cup

By Allan Crisp

West Torrens Birkalla knocked reigning Premier League champions Blue Eagles off their perennial trophy winning perch by claiming the inaugural SA Summer Series with a 2-0 grand final win on Sunday at Hindmarsh Stadium.

A 57th minute headed goal by lanky Nick Dawes and a 76th minute clincher from Peter Mihalopoulos tilted the scales the State League teamís way, while Birkalla's resolute defence blunted the usually unstoppable Blues attack.

Former Blue Eagle and West Adelaide defender Con Kokkinoplitis, Paul Pezos and Paul Gaffney were the defensive ringleaders in denying series top scorer Michael Brooks and his striking partner Frank Sergi.

Gaffney was the first to put the ball into the Eagles net after four minutes but was ruled offside, while the generally fluid Blues struggled to create chances.

Birkalla goalkeeper Robin Welch was concussed in halting a Brooks, Sergi thrust and was taken to hospital for observation. Welch was replaced by Anthony Breaden.

Dawes shoved Birks into the lead with a thumping header from a John Fusco cross before a Mihalopoulos drive was kept out by Blue Eagles captain Don DeIeso.

Ex-West Adelaide Shark Aaron Westervelt floated over a corner for Milhalopoulos to nod the ball towards goal where Gino DeLucia only succeeded in flicking it into his own net — a failing that saw him smartly replaced in goal by Anthony Spinelli.

SA Summer Series Grand Final

Birkalla 2 (Dawes 57, DeLucia tog, 76) **Blue Eagles 0.**

3rd Place Play-off: **Olympians 3** (J. Spatharos 7, N. Tsoukalas 36, Pappas 75) **Raiders 1** (Saric 70).

Semi-finals

Birkalla 3 (Hagias 2, Westervelt) **Raiders 0.**

Blue Eagles 5 (Artone 2, Senesi 2, Brooks) **Olympic FC 2** (Albanese, Ibrahim).

Wounded Wolves await Newcastle

By Emma Nwaneri

Last weekend's 2-1 defeat of the Wollongong Wolves by Canberra Cosmos, brought to an end, the reigning National Soccer League champion's 11-match unbeaten run. Wolves' hardworking coach, Ronnie Corry summed up the mood in the team after the defeat by Cosmos. In his words, 'this match is the best wake-up call we could possibly get'.

The fact however that it took a disputed goal from Canberra's Uruguayan striker, Milton Cortes to end the Wolves' impressive run in the NSL, says a lot about the champions' near-invincibility.

If the truth must be told, Wollongong Wolves are on a high since returning triumphantly from Papua New Guinea in January where they subdued all opposition to nick the Oceania ticket to the World Club championship, billed for Spain in July.

Ironically, last weekend's loss to Cosmos came just four days after they were grouped together with legendary Argentine side, Boca Juniors and top Spanish side, Deportivo La Coruna in the world club tourney. Could Saturday's defeat to Cosmos therefore had been a mere case of nerves?

Chances are that it wasn't. Since returning from Papua New Guinea, the Wolves have practically taken the NSL by storm; recording four wins out of seven games; scoring a whopping 19 goals; letting in only a meagre nine; and producing two candidates for the highest goleador award in Scott Chipperfield and Saso Petrovski.The result has been that the Wolves leapt from fifth position in January, to second at the end of Round 21.

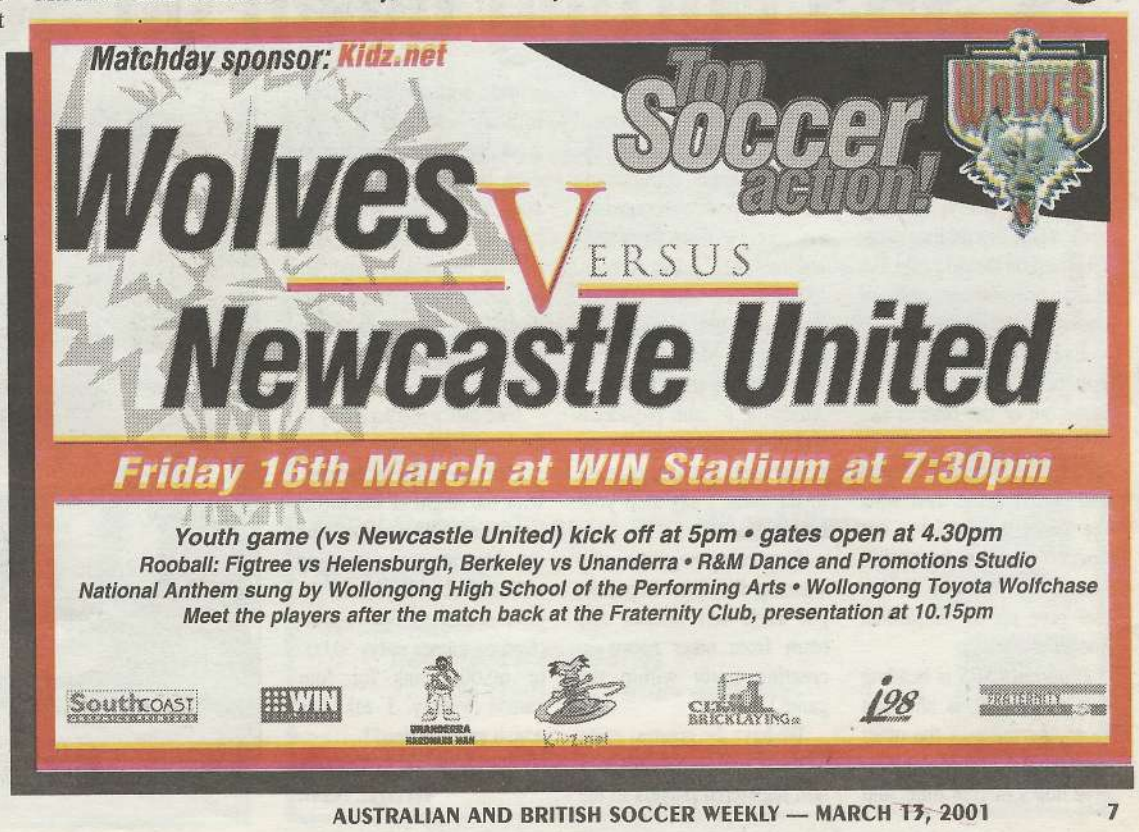
Scott Chipperfield: Wollongong's ace striker who is back with the team from national duty.

This week, they host Newcastle United, who in all fairness, are doomed as far as Season 2000-2001 is concerned. The Lee Sterrey-led Newcastle side have lurched from defeat to defeat despite the huge enthusiasm displayed by both players and technical crew at the start of the season.

Players like veteran goalkeeper Bob Catlin and Todd McManus have constituted the backbone of the team all season, but painfully, that has proved too little to save Newcastle's sinking ship.

Home advantage has meant pretty little to Newcastle.They have lost several games in front of their sparse home fans at the Marathon stadium. Last weekend, they again went down to Adelaide City Force losing by the odd goal. That, basically, has been the story of Newcastle's campaign all season-long.

At the WIN stadium, against a wounded Wolves side this weekend, Newcastle will be faced with a fait accompli of sorts. It looks unfair to admit defeat at this stage, but if precedence has to be the yardstick, there really is no other reasonable outcome of Newcastle's visit to the WIN stadium, come Friday.



Letters to the Editor

WOLVES' STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Dear Sir,

I am disgusted at the thought of Soccer Australia getting a share of what is rightfully the Wollongong Wolves. Yes, I am talking about the upcoming World Club Championships and the estimated $4.5 million the Wolves will have rightfully earned.

It is interesting to note how little support SA showed the Wolves in Papua New Guinea for the qualifying tournament. Not only did they make the NSL Champions completely pay their own way (flights, accommodation etc.), but only one SA representative, Phil Torpey, even bothered to attend the tournament and show some support. Infact, none of them even turned up to the airport to congratulate the Wolves. I'm sure they were all too busy booking their tickets to cash in on the Wolves success.

Tony Labbozzetta: Soccer Australia Chairman.

Now that the Wolves have qualified SA wants to send five or so 'representatives' over to Spain, no doubt for a Siesta and to soak up some of that wonderful Spanish food and sun.

Tell me what on earth five SA representatives could possibly do over there, especially seeing they don't do anything over here?

So is it fair that Soccer Australia get a share of the Wolves cash box when the NSL Champions deserve it and had to do it alone??

I agree that money needs to be put back into the game but it is SA, the blood sucking thieves, who constantly starve the clubs of any finance they should receive.

Can anybody out there please justify why SA should be reaping the rewards when they don't offer any support or help??

Does anybody have any opinion on this issue? Tony Labbozetta, maybe you could provide the answer we are looking for.

And a final comment on the Colombia game. What a waste of SA's time and money!!!

Not only have we been humiliated by a second string Colombian side, we have shown the world how serious we are to qualify for the World Cup by leaving our regular European based players at home, despite most of them having the week off due to International fixtures. I thought a few of the NSL players (Chipperfield, Thompson, Vidmar) showed they should be considered for first team World Cup selection but we all know this is unlikely to happen, so why waste everybody's time???

Frank we want to see a serious commitment on this World Cup campaign, not these, as Johhny Warren calls them, 'donkey games' which mean very little and serve little purpose for our qualification.

NSL players rightfully should have as much chance of playing for the Socceroos than any of the overseas based players but please show some purpose.

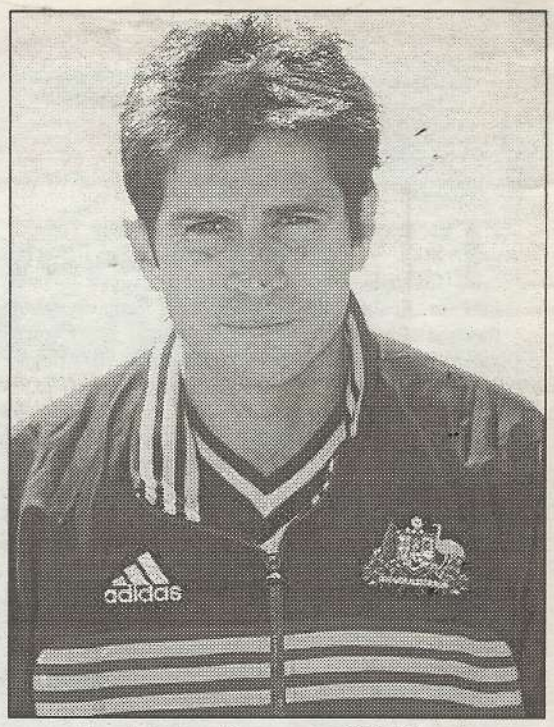
Bleed these players into a framework of regular first team players who you would definitely use for the big games so that they can get a positive experience and the unit can develop as a whole.

You can't expect any team who have played a couple of games together to be asked to match world powers from South America. It simply won't work and the failure at the Olympic Games should illustrate this.

Please lift your game SA.

J. Deane,
Wollongong. NSW.

Wollongong Wolves celebrating their win over Perth Glory last year, in the NSL grand final, which qualified them for the world club championships, holding in July, in Spain.



Frank Farina: Socceroos Chief Coach.

WHY FARINA, ZELIC SHOULD MEND FENCES

Dear Sir,

Ned Zelic he is such a player, that even when he is out of form; he is still playing better, as an average player in form! Or it is worth to have him "in the tent; or outside of it."

And "if the mountain does not go to Mohammed, then Mohammed goes to the mountain," policy is the better way to follow.

Please Mr Farina come down to earth, and tell to Mr Zelic, that you are 100% behind him, and you expect that he may play in any formation, which you may put him! And why not?

So 30-40-years ago in Europe, we used to have an A and a B national team, and a A&A, and B&B national games.

Following this idea why don't you Mr Farina, choose one team from Australia only, and one team from overseas based players, and from the two form one national Australian team! Just to silence people, who do not like the idea of having national team, from overseas based players only!

After all the best 11 from there, are better, as the second best 11 from overseas!!

R. Marton,
Tingalpa. QLD.

ABSW goofs

Dear Sir,

Regarding an article in your newspaper on the 6th of March 2001 (pg 2), "U-20 Socceroos through to Argentina", I was sorely disappointed to find that your article did not include the team line-up.

Surely a game of such importance should have been covered more accurately.

Also in your account of the NSL match between Northern Spirit and Adelaide City (pg 11) your reporter stated the attendance was 2,108, whilst on the rear page the attendance was stated as 6,106.

I know your newspaper doesn't take much notice of your Victorian readers, as I have already sent two e-mails to your paper which have not been replied to nor printed. Is this because they were offensive or your paper just doesn't feel the need to respond to some readers?

A. Vaccaro,
Brunswick, VIC

Farina's favourites

Dear Sir,

Farina favours the Italians, because he thinks that they have the world's best soccer brains and players. For example Steve Corica, he is Italian, plus his ex-play mate! At home there are lots better players then Corica, but they are not Italians.

The honest and logical things would be, to choose eleven players from home and eleven players from abroad. That is how we would have a strong Australian national team, capable to qualify!

I wish Farina would consider Angelo Costanzo but only if he proves his worth as a reliable player!

Max Smith
Wynnum. QLD.

Is *SBS* cutting down on Soccer?

Dear Sir,

Over the last few months many people have had their say in your paper regarding where our game is heading, also many discussions were televised on the *SBS (On The Ball)* programme and of course on the internet.

Everyone it seems has an opinion, however one that came out of the blue is Les Murray's internet comments stating that our game is dead and buried, great. Just what the game needs from Mr Soccer perhaps he would like to take it a step further and give up on Australian Soccer altogether.

It appears *SBS* is heading that way as it is showing more and more of the other sports that the other channels give hours of free time, and much less time to soccer.

Please note everytime I have written or rang the other channels complaining about the poor coverage soccer receives from them their answers have always been, 'SBS looks after Soccer' Sadly no more.

To you Mr Murray, to your sporting team to Soccer Australia, to club presidents and their committees. To our players and last but not least, to the fans, I say stop your bickering.

Stop being negative, stop washing dirty linen in public, put aside self interest and learn from other sports in creating unity within the game.

We have the greatest game in the world, over 400 million registered players in the world, with millions (nay) billions watching it every week, and even Australia, an oval ball country can produce magnificent youngsters who can match it with anyone on the world scene. No Mr Murray our game is not dead. How dare you show so little respect to these youngsters.

One last word, in a city of four million can anyone explain how Rugby League, with the might of the media (including *SBS* it seems) and the corporate sector injecting millions of dollars into the game can only attract (Sydney games only) 50,000 or 60,000 fans for four games weekly. I ask you which game is dead?

L. Fardell,
Terrigal. NSW.

Steve Corica (middle) in action for Australia during a friendly game against Brazil, in 1999.

Soccer and Oz Media

Dear Sir,

In the Saturday, 3rd March, edition of *Courier Mail* not one article on Soccer, was in it, only results of two Friday NSL matches.

Sunday 4th March, edition of *Sunday Mail* no articles on Soccer on any pages only a short piece on Viduka's Leeds v Manchester United match. No NSL results matches for Saturday.

You mentioned that a four person Media Department were employed full-time by Soccer Australia, but what do they actually do?

Surely there is something of note to print on a daily basis in all the newspapers of the country, from the NSL or the wider world, as there is of other sports of dubious recognition.

G Evans
Runcorn, QLD.

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

PLAY IT AGAIN SASF

The success of the inaugural SA Summer Series has motivated the SASF to announce that the pre-season competition is to be an annual event.

SASF General Manager Tony Farrugia said he was delighted by the response by the clubs and the public towards the 2001 series, declaring it had filled the void created with the cessation of the Ampol Cup.

The latter pre-winter season competition pioneered soccer under lights in Adelaide, running for an Australian record 32 years.

The 2001 summer version was born to compensate for the earlier than normal finish to the local league season, needed to accommodate the 2000 Olympic football tournament.

Clubs suffering from football starvation because of the lengthy break between seasons, welcomed the new concept which programmed games at Hindmarsh Stadium and at suburban grounds at weekends.

Five groups, comprising 10 Premier League and 10 State League clubs contested the series, a format that produced entertaining, high scoring matches.

Lop sided winning margins eventuated in some games due to the standard gap between leading Premier League teams and the weaker State League clubs.

When the 2001 series is reviewed, consideration could be given to seeding the clubs, or alternatively, restricting qualification to the top six Premier League clubs and the two promoted State League clubs for the 2002 season.

DAY CALLS IT A NIGHT

It may have happened previously, but not in living memory can we recall a player scoring a crucial finals-saving goal one, week and leaving the club the next.

Nathan Day's swan song for Adelaide City Force was the match against Football Kingz when he nodded in a great goal to give City the lead in what ultimately was a 1-1 draw.

The former West Adelaide Sharks and Sydney United grand final striker has signed for SA Premier League club Metro Stars, but sas he has not slammed the door on his NSL career.

On his last hurrah goal, Day, 27, said, "It was a good way to finish, not only for the club but for my own satisfaction because I proved to myself that I could still do it."

Day confessed he was not content at City, but said his decision to quit was not a reaction to any one issue.

During his time with the Sharks Day guested for Elizabeth Rams (now Playford Patriots), suited up with Northern Demons during the close season when he was with Sydney United and was a guest with Raiders when he was a Force player.

Goalmouth action during last week's Champions League game between Real Madrid and Leeds United which attracted comments from Martin Tyler.

GENTLE REBUFF

Noted English TV commentator Martin Tyler proved that it is not necessary to rant tirades of abuse to get a point across.

While calling the UEFA Champions League clash between Real Madrid and Leeds United for SBS last Wednesday morning, Tyler said. "This referee is not giving us a very good impression of his abilities."

WEST END CUP DRAW

Premier League clubs will clash in four opening round West End Federation Cup ties on Saturday week.

Re-named Playford City Patriots (formerly Elizabeth City) has drawn to meet last season's grand finalist Modbury Jets at Ramsay Park; Port Lion Pirates play Metro Stars at Pirate Park, promoted Olympic FC will host Croydon Kings at Thebarton Oval and Adelaide City will front Raiders at Newton Sports Field.

The biggest crowd of the round is expected in Port Pirie where the derby between Northern Demons and Port Pirie City is fought on home turf.

Two Preliminary Round games — Fulham Gardens v Elizabeth Vale and Para Hills Knights v Hills Hawks will be decided on Saturday (March 17).

WARRENTED VISIT

SBS commentator Johnny Warren will be guest speaker at a luncheon in his honour at the Hotel Adelaide on Friday.

Bookings can be made through Zoe on 8267.3444 during business hours.

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7.30am-9am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Channel 10 Sports Presenter Robbie Popplestone, former Australian international John Perin, The Advertiser Soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and amateur league player-coach Peter Millar.

WEST END FEDERATION CUP ROUND 1

Saturday, March 24

Seaford v Salisbury United
Bosa v Panthers
Winner: Fulham Gdns v Eliz Vale v Stirling Districts
NAB v St Peters Old Collegians
Adelaide City v Raiders
Playford Patriots v Modbury Jets
Western Strikers v Campbelltown City
Winner: Para Hills v Hawks v Blue Eagles
Birkalla v Old Ignatians
Enfield Falcons v Cobras
Port Lion v Metro Stars
Olympic FC v Croydon Kings
Comets v Salisbury Villa
Northern Demons v Port Pirie City
Hanhdorf v Cumberland
White City v Noarlunga United

Cortes gets riot act

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Cosmos' talented Uruguayan midfielder, Milton Cortes, will have to work to win a regular place in the team, coach Mike Milovanovic said.

Cortes, bought from South America at the beginning of the season, delights the Bruce Stadium crowd with his silky touches and slick ball control, but under former coach Tom Sermanni rarely played a full 90 minutes, often starting the match on the bench.

That policy continued under Sermanni's successor, Mike Milovanovic. In the 3-2 win over Newcastle United, Milovanovic's first game in charge, Cortes did not get a run until the last 90 seconds.

Which is disappointing considering the club has invested considerable sums of money in the player, sending him out of the country to New Zealand so that a tourist visa could be converted to one that allowed him to play professional soccer.

However, Milovanovic said he picks teams to win games, and against Newcastle, he believed the best combination was on the park.

Milton Cortes

"Fortunately I was proved right on that occasion," he said.

"Milton is a good player. He has excellent qualities with attacking flair and vision and there's no doubt he's a crowd-pleaser. He wasn't in the starting line-up because I thought there were others who could better do the job I was requiring."

Belconnen lose Langone to Gold Coast

By Graham Cooke

Belconnen Blue Devils midfielder Leo Langone has been transferred to Gold Coast City, in Queensland. No fee is involved.

Langone, who played 11 games in the NSW Premier League, scoring one goal, is already in Queensland, where he has begun a university course.

Devils coach Lino Fiorese said Langone was an excellent attacking player who would be an asset to any team.

"We miss his experience, but wish him all the best, both in his playing career and his studies," Fiorese said.

LG BILL TURNER CUP 2001

CAN EPPING DO IT?

By Stan Holland

Over 600 schools are preparing for their attempt on the 2001 LG Bill Turner Cup. All eyes will be on Epping Boys High who will be attempting to do something that only one other school has been able to do since the competition started in 1979.

Only Westfields Sports High has been able to win the cup back-to-back. That was in 1997 and 1998.

In both years Westfields had excellent squads and enjoyed rightful favouritism.

The 1997 final four were good sides but North Queensland's Kirwan State High couldn't handle the power of Westfields and went down 1-4 but they certainly learnt a lot from that encounter. Narrabeen proved too strong for Canberra's Kaleen High winning 2-0 in the second semi-final. In the play-off for third place, Kirwan accounted for Kaleen, and in the final, Westfields scored three times without replay from Narrabeen.

TOUGHER IN 1998

Four outstanding school sides arrived in Newcastle for the 1998 series and what a series it was.

Once again Westfields ran out winners in the first semi-final defeating Queenslands Cavendish Road High from the Logan City region 2-1 after thrilling encounter.

In an even more thrilling match a 3-2 scoreline saw Dubbo's Delroy High squeeze out Endeavour Sports High, a result that some called a 'boilover.'

On the final night the stage was set for more thrills and sensational goal scoring. Six goals were equally shared in the play-off where Cavendish Road and Endeavour drew.

It was the final that was high drama from the first whistle onwards. Quite a number of good judges felt that, Westfields and most spectators had underrated Delroy.

The match must be considered as one of the best, if not the best final ever. When Westfields scored some felt the flood gates would open but such was not the case. Delroys reply sent their supporters into a near frenzy. On that night the Western Arewa champions had more home supporters than the Sydney champions who were defending the Cup.

An even scoreline at full-time meant it was Golden goal time. The thrill a minute football continued and high drama ended proceedings.

A soft drive headed towards the goals and the Delroy defender moved over to block it. However the ground by that time of the evening had become slippery which caused him to slip over. He was unable to recover, and the ball went by him and beyond the outstretched hands of the goalkeeper into the side net.

It was all over and Westfields had done what no other school had done, won the cup two years in a row.

The question is: Can Epping Boys High match that achievement in 2001? Only time will tell.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

BRISBANE STRIKERS 4
SYDNEY UNITED 2

By Glenn Davis

Sydney United's national league finals hopes suffered another blow after a convincing 4-2 defeat by Brisbane Strikers at Ballymore on Sunday night.

The Strikers were back to near full strength after a horror season with injuries and proved they would not surrender meekly to their own slim hopes of clinching a finals berth.

Sydney United's new coach Velimir Kupresak is still searching for his first national league win after losing 1-0 to Melbourne Knights last week.

Kupresak was handed the top coaching job after the Sydney United board sacked its former coach Alan Hunter a fortnight ago.

Sydney United, needing to win to bridge a seven point gap on sixth placed Melbourne Knights, began well enough but failed to penetrate the tight Strikers defence until late in the game.

The Strikers, with youth internationals, Jade North, Wayne Srhoj, Jon McKain back in the side along with the experience of striker Paul Foster, led 1-0 at halftime after Jeromy Harris broke the deadlock in the 24th minute.

Foster, back after seven weeks off with a serious knee injury, put Harris away down the right flank before he drew Sydney United keeper Brett Hughes and neatly chipped into the net.

Sydney United suffered an early set back four minutes after the

break when Striker's defender Jade North sent David Pilic away to slot home from inside the box.

The Strikers looked well in command in the early stages of the second half but the visitors rallied to peg back the deficit in the 62nd minute.

Rangy defender Paul Bilokapic moved up for a corner from Tom Pondeljak smashing home a powerful header past keeper Corey

Brisbane's Peter Buljan in action against Sydney United.

Baldock who had another fine game for the Strikers.

However, Sydney United's fightback was only short lived before the homeside went to a 3-1 lead following a controversial penalty awarded by Brisbane referee Peter Green after Pilic was brought down in the box.

Foster made no mistake with the spot kick for his seventh goal for the season.

The match looked headed for 3-1 finish before both sides capitalised on some poor defence each netting in injury time.

Foster scored his second to give the Strikers a 4-1 lead with a powerful left foot drive while Sydney United got back to 4-2 virtually from the kick off when substitute Akwaki Ageyi scored seconds before the final whistle.

With the make-up of next year's national league to be soon decided, the small crowd sent their own shuttle message to 'Soccer Australia with one banner declaring Brisbane Strikers — Queensland's Soccer Future.

PERTH GLORY 4
NORTHERN SPIRIT 1

By Richard Kreider

Perth Glory's aspiration's of finishing the home and away element of the season in one of the all-important top two positions, continues to hold sway after securing a 4-1 win over Northern Spirit on a night of high drama at Perth Oval last Saturday night which saw ace midfielder Kasey Wehrman dropped from the side for disciplinary reasons.

Double strikes from the NSL's most lethal front-line combination of Damian Mori and Bobby Despotovski, once again initiated a Perth victory and now equal the Wolves unbeaten run which came to a halt over the weekend following a shock away loss to Canberra.

"It was another excellent win for Perth Glory and now a club record unbeaten run of eleven games," said Glory coach Bernd Stange who was doing his utmost to play down the Wehrman incident to a sardine-packed post-match media conference.

"There were four scored and I believe Alistair's (Edwards) disallowed header was in - but at the end of the day, we are happy with the result," said Stange who admitted his side went to sleep shortly after break before regaining the ascendancy and netting two late goals.

Despite the win, Mori was quick to point out the hard work is still ahead of them and how crucial it is not to slip up, with South Melbourne, Wollongong Wolves and dark horses Sydney Olympic clearly the teams to beat.

"There are seven more games for us before the finals and we simply can't afford to drop any points if we want to make the top two," said Mori.

Spirit coach Mick Hickman was understandably disappointed by the loss, especially since his side had produced some quality football straight after the break.

"I have never even thought about the 'top-six' since I have taken over," he said. "This is an improvement thing for me. I've stemmed the tide a little bit, but obviously we have got a lot more work to do," Hickman concluded.

Perth Glory's hardworking striker Damian Mori (middle) breezes past a Northern Spirit defender.

After an evenly balanced start to the game, Spirit took the lead by way of a Ben Burgess penalty in the 8th minute when Glory goalie Jason Petkovic, who had an ordinary game by his usual standards, upended Matt Langdon in a chase for the ball that he never looked like winning. The tall and highly talented custodian, who was celebrating his 50th NSL appearance with the club, can consider himself extremely fortunate to collect just a yellow card for the incident.

The home side however, took just two minutes to get back on level terms when Mori left Spirit 'keeper John Perosh diving in the opposite direction with an almost grass level close-range header — provided to him by Despotovski after some build-up play from Gary Faria and Edgar Junior.

Glory eventually took the lead in the 17th minute from an easily converted Despotovski penalty after Mike Smith inflicted a clumsy challenge on Perth livewire Faria. Like Petkovic, Smith was shown a yellow card from referee Eddie Lennie, who was standing in for the absent Simon Micallef. Glory were then forced to work hard in order to maintain the upper hand, with Langdon, Rob Enes, Troy Cranney, Burgess and Craig Foster all working hard to get their team back in the game.

However, after weathering the storm, Glory made it 3-1 in the 70th minute when Edwards and Edgar Junior combined to position Mori in with a chance to strike. The seasoned striker first sidestepped Stuart Howson before bulging the net from the front of the box.

The icing on the Glory victory was laid in the final minute of regulation time when Perosh could only parry a left-side byeline strike from substitute John Carbone, to the feet of Despotovski who didn't waste any time in stabbing the ball home for a personal season best 15 goals.

Edwards can consider himself unlucky not have been added to the scoresheet in the 78th minute when his close-range shot struck the underside of the Spirit crossbar before bouncing inside the goal and rebounding out.

MARCONI STALLIONS 2
EASTERN PRIDE 1

By Arvind Hickman

Marconi have gained three valuable points from a stubborn Eastern Pride with a 2-1 victory at Marconi Stadium on Saturday night.

A last minute deflection rescued the Stallions from a well-organised Pride outfit, after striker Archie Thompson was sent off under controversial circumstances.

Marconi Coach, Eddie Krncevic, was happy with the three points and paid plaudits to their under-rated opponents.

"Three points to me was very vital today. I thought we started off well today, we were hungry, the ball was moving well but then we started to diddle-daddle in the back and made some mistakes."

"Your 1-0 down and score a fantastic goal off John Gibson again, and you battle away and you get a man sent off and your always against it. I thought they did well and showed a lot of character without Archie to take the three points."

Eastern Pride Coach, Jeff Hopkins, highlighted how the same old mistakes continue to thwart his team.

"We got what we deserved today, week in and week out we let shots come in and they scored, even if it was from a deflection," he said.

Eastern Pride certainly took the challenge up to their more illustrious opponents and didn't play like a bottom placed team.

However, Marconi opened the game in a flurry as Vlado Zoric created havoc down the left side. Infact, Zoric had the first genuine chance of the game when he sliced through the Pride defence but couldn't beat 'keeper Eugene Galekovic from a tight angle under pressure.

Marconi's defence were looking shaky without the presence of captain Dominic Longo, and experienced international Pan-Keun Kim.

In the 14th minute Marconi gifted Pride the lead when John Maisano played a medicine ball back to 'keeper David Aceski. Naum Sekulovski pounced on the poorly hit pass and played the ball across to Mike Conroy for an easy tap in.

The Stallions reply came in the 24th minute via midfielder John 'The Cannon' Gibson. Kris Trajanovski laid back a simple ball from the edge of the penalty area to Gibson who thundered a drive from around 30 metres out.

Galekovic had no chance against this world class strike.

Late in the half Sekulovski was presented with a good

Vlado Zoric: Architect of Pride's defeat.

chance after Ante Deak played a dangerous cross into the penalty box. Unfortunately the Pride striker's shot flashed across the face of goal and both teams entered the dressing rooms locked at one a piece.

In the 79th minute came what seemed to be a definitive moment in the game when Archie Thompson was sent off for diving, a second bookable offence.

Thompson certainly looked to have been clipped but made the dive look dramatic in the penalty box.

Marconi to their credit rallied with only ten men and were rewarded in the 89th minute with a winner. Brendon Renaud's free-kick rattled the wall and fell fortuitously for Mark Babic, who's wayward shot took a wicked deflection before trickling into the goal.

Three valuable points keep Marconi in the top six while Eastern Pride continue to look for something out of a disappointing season.

PARRAMATTA POWER 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 3

By Julian Murphy

Parramatta Power's finals hopes continue to fade after they were defeated 3-0 at home by South Melbourne. A rampant Andy Vlahos scored all three of South's goals as the title favourites completely outclassed the home side.

It may be Vlahos who grabbed most of the headlines, but this South Melbourne performance was anything but a one-man show. The visitors displayed great understanding and some of their passages of play were simply superb, particularly considering the wet conditions at Parramatta Stadium.

The South Melbourne side was stacked with dangerous attacking players and they troubled the Parramatta defence from the outset. Vlahos and Goran Lozanovski pushed well forward up the flanks giving great support to Vaughan Coveny and skipper Paul Trimboli. These four formed what was virtually a four-pronged attack and they played with a confidence and precision that would have tested any NSL defence.

However, the first opportunity of the game fell to Parramatta when they were awarded a free kick on the edge of the area in the 8th minute. Walter Ardone curled the ball into the path of Luke Roodenburg, but the Power striker could only knock the ball weakly at South 'keeper Michael Petkovic. This Power attack was certainly not a sign of things to come and the home side were a goal down within two minutes. An unmarked Vlahos fired past exposed Parramatta 'keeper Andrew Crews after some intelligent play on the right side by Lozanovski and Trimboli.

Power's Ahmad Elrich (left) fights for the ball with South's Andy Vlahos.

In contrast to South's fluid and well-organised football, the Power struggled to impose themselves on the game often giving away possession far too easily.

When they did manage to move positively into South territory, they encountered a resilient and composed defence. South 'keeper Michael Petkovic was rarely tested by Power strikers Roodenburg and Joel Griffiths, although he was called upon to make a great save when Roodenburg headed down a Walter Ardone free-kick ten minutes before half-time.

Steve Iosifidis blew a great opportunity to put the visitors a further goal ahead when he struck Crews left post seconds before half time. The break failed to slow South's momentum and they didnít let a second chance pass when David Barrett handed them one on a platter two minutes after the re-start. Vlahos collected his second goal when he coolly chipped the ball past an advancing Crews after Trimboli had pounced on a Barrett blunder deep in the Parramatta half.

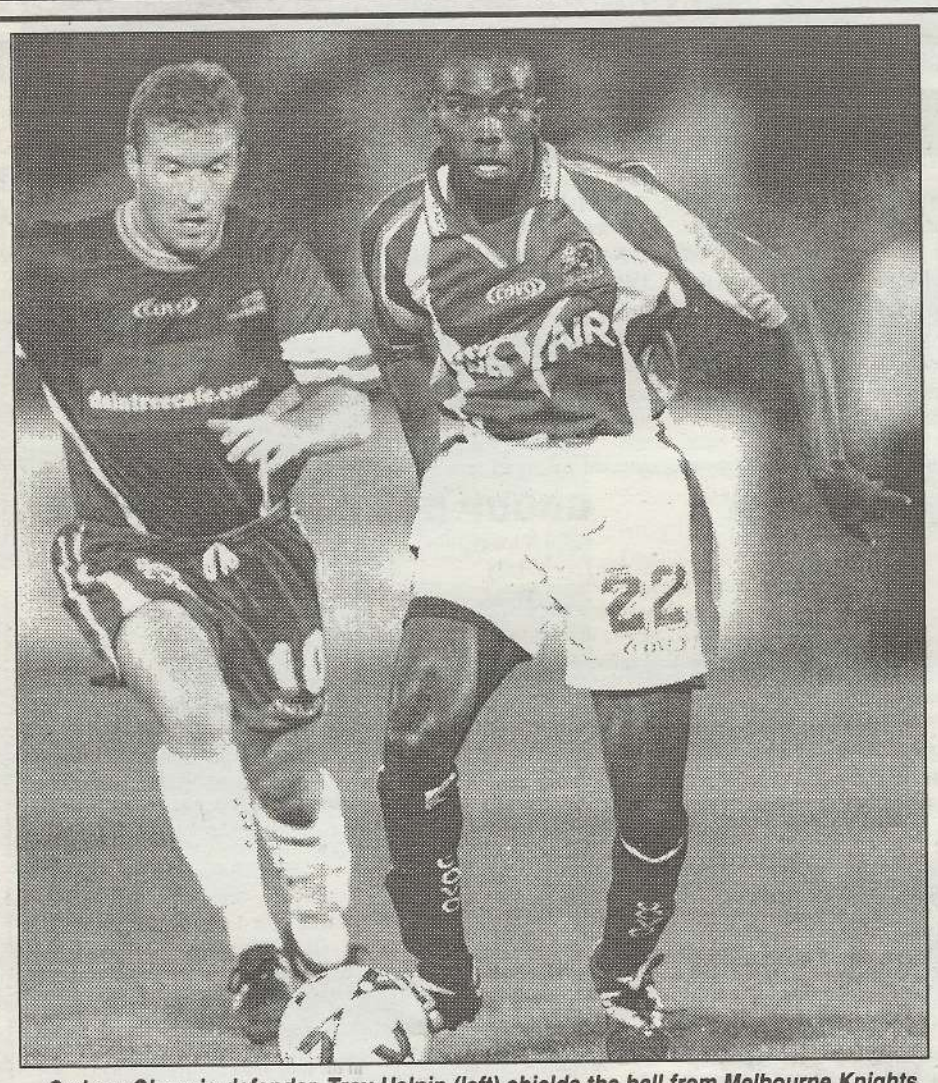
Seven minutes later a rout appeared on the cards as South were awarded apenalty when Milan Blagojevic bundled over Lozanovski in the area. Vlahos' spot-kick was well blocked by Crews, but he only succeeded in knocking it back to Vlahos, who made no mistake with the follow up.

The Power were forced to play out the final 20 minutes with ten men after substitute Andrew Clark was sent off for a late tackle on David Clarkson. Not only did Parramatta prevent further humiliation; they came close to grabbing a consolation goal late in the game. But Mehmet Durakovic and the South defence held firm, becoming only the fourth side this season to keep the Power scoreless.

With only four points from their last nine games, the Power now face must win games against fellow Sydney teams, United and Olympic, over the next fortnight.

On the other hand, South find themselves alone at the top of the table and have all but booked a spot in the finals.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE



Sydney Olympic defender, Troy Halpin (left) shields the ball from Melbourne Knights midfielder, Tota Da Costa.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3

By Bert van Bedaf

The hot and cold Knights came twice back from behind, but the effort was too little and came too late to stave off a reshuffled Sydney Olympic, who beat the home-side 3-2 at Knights Stadium last Friday night.

"We deserved to win. You don't score three goals against the Melbourne Knights unless you play good football," Olympic coach Branko Culina said afterwards and Knights coach Vlado Vanis wasn't about to argue with him.

"They are a good side. They scored three goals. It was an excellent performance from them. I'm disappointed with the result. Perhaps we could have gotten a draw. Horvat hit the post and Bolten made some good saves," Vanis said.

Culina was confident Olympic had just about wrapped up a finals spot.

"One more win will do it for us," he declared after his side had climbed to the top of the ladder.

Vanis was less certain of his team's finals prospects. "Next week we must win our game, if we're to stay in the top six," he said.

Olympic hosts the Brisbane Strikers on Sunday, while the Knights travel to bottom-side Eastern Pride on Saturday in a Victorian derby.

Both coaches were full of praise of their best players. "(Lindsay) Wilson was absolutely brilliant," Culina said about his wingback, who tore the Knights defence apart.

"Toto (Da Costa) is always dangerous. He can finished a game in five minutes," Vanis said about his striker, who scored the second equaliser, but could not avoid his side's defeat.

Olympic did what South Melbourne failed to do a fortnight ago, take the initiative and score with their opening chance after ten minutes.

Elias Augerinos crossed to the far post, where Kresimir Marusic knocked in a half-volley. Knights 'keeper Lou Acevski had narrowed the angle and got a hand to it, but the ball struck the net off the inside of the post.

The Knights levelled five minutes before half-time from an Andy Vargas free-kick, which curled into the path of Adrian Cervinski, who deflected it into the net.

The Knights should have gone head immediately after the break, but Olympic 'keeper Clint Bolton and the woodwork denied the homeside the vital break. Joel Porter unleashed a powerful shot, from a Cervinski back-heel, which Bolton brilliantly saved.

Steve Horvat, back from his whirlwind tour around the word, from Holland to Colombia to the USA and back to Melbourne, produced a 25m pile-driver that bounced off the inside of the far post and ricocheted back into play.

Immediately on the counter, Olympic struck to regain the lead. Wilson crossed a long ball and Augerinos smashed it past Acevski Marth had a close-range header that Bolton plucked out of the air and Alex Kiratzoglou flicked the ball into the hands of Bolten from an Ivan Jolic cross.

Finally, in the 67th minute, Toto Da Costa got the crowd to their feet with a lightning equaliser from a Lapsansky pass. His shot looked like a miss-kick but the ball deflected off an Olympic defencer and bounced past Porter to hit the net.

But Olympic again went ahead eleven minutes later and this time they stuck to their lead. Marusic took the corner, which was half cleared, leaving Pablo Cardozo to strike the winner, which put Olympic on top.

NEWCASTLE UTD 0
ADELAIDE FORCE 1

By Greg Danvers

Adelaide Force ensured they stayed in touch with the top six with dour 1-0 win over the hapless Newcastle United at Marathon Stadium on Saturday night.

Force, without Italian star Claudio Pelosi, handled everything United threw at them in the opening 15 minutes; slotted home a gift goal in the 20th minute and then defended stoically to secure the three points.

"We are happy to get the points," Adelaide coach Zoran Matic said.

"Newcastle pressed well but that is the way the game goes some days.

"Unfortunately Pelosi had to return home with the death of his father and it will be unlikely he will play next week."

Force capitalised on a horror United error in the 20th minute. A poor goal kick, after the Force had gone forward through Brad Hassell and Aurelio Vidmar working down the right with Vidmar's shot sailing high over the bar, resulted in Louis Brain finding the net.

United's kick was cleaned up by Scott Tunbridge who threaded the ball through some poor defence for Brain to slot home.

"I thought we played well early in the first half and put Adelaide under some pressure," Newcastle coach Lee Sterrey said.

"But we gave away a stupid, absolute stupid goal.

"We know this ground like the back of our hand and we're playing out from the back on angle 25 yards from goal.

"It should never go into a midfielder's feet that far out from goal because we know how bad this pitch is. It's just disappointing to lose when we were the better team in the first half."

Sterrey started the match with 3-4-3 formation that troubled the visitors.

Skipper Glenn Sprod was pushed forward from his usual left back position in to a wide left midfield role.

The midfield looked strong and in control early with Sprod and Antony Surjan finding the three pronged front-line of Andy Harper, John Buonavoglia and Daniel McBreen with some pinpoint passing.

Louis Brain, whose 20th minute goal secured victory for Adelaide City Force.

Several chances early in the first half went begging with Sterrey citing a lack of confidence in front of goal as the culprit. Surely it is time a few of the out-of-form senior players shook hands with the Youth or Colts coach.

Veteran striker Andy Harper had a clear cut chance to equalise in the 64th minute but cannoned the ball straight into the arms of Adelaide 'keeper Adrian Cagalj, the goal would have been Harper's 100th in the NSL.

Another chance for Harper and possibly Esala Masi in the 82nd minute was punched away by Cagalj from a Travis Dodd cross.

Mark Wilson received his fourth yellow card of the season in the 59th minute and will miss this week's clash with the premiers Wollongong Wolves.

CANBERRA COSMOS 2
WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1

By Graham Cooke

Milton Cortes, the pint-sized Uruguayan with the twinkling feet and breathtaking vision, was the architect of Wollongong Wolves' 1-2 defeat in Saturday's upset result at Bruce Stadium — although many Wolves fans will believe referee Angelo Nardi should at least share the blame.

Cortes turned the game for Canberra when he came on after an hour's play, substituting solid but uninspired work-rate for dash and creativity just when the Wolves were beginning to believe they were coasting towards a hard-earned single-goal win.

Almost at once Cortes went past two defenders and flicked a pass to Jon Angelucci, who had come on a few minutes before him, but the striker, still struggling to find his early-season form, volleyed over.

And with time running out he poached an equaliser — the ball running loose in an untidy piece of broken play in front of goal, allowing him to slip a shot past Dean Anastasiadas.

If that had been the final score, no doubt the home fans would have been more than pleased, but just two minutes later the game was clouded by controversy as Anastasiadas and striker David Milin clashed in a chase for the ball that left both sprawling on the turf.

It bobbled to Angelucci who had no difficulty flicking it into the unguarded net for a goal Nardi allowed over the furious protests of the Wolves players.

Not surprisingly the two coaches had different views on the incident after the game. Canberra's Mike Milovanovic said it was a 50-50 ball and Milin had every right to present a vigorous challenge. "It was a decision which went our way," he said.

Opposite number Ron Corry said he could not see how the referee allowed play to go on. "It was a two-footed challenge and ought to have been pulled up," he said.

The rights and wrongs may have been less furiously debated had Scott Chipperfield's stoppage-time drive against the underside of the bar gone in instead of bounced out. As it is, the result leaves the Oceania champions with some work to do if they are to add this year's minor premiership to their trophy collection.

The first half had been full of incident as the Cosmos turned on one of their best displays of the season to take the game to the Wolves. The visitors had the better of play in the middle of the park only to break down against some fine defending in which Hiroshi Miyazawa and Robbie Hooker were outstanding. Canberra, on the other hand, were more dangerous from corners and free kicks.

From a corner kick Mark Hagger's powerfully struck header beat Anastasiadas but was headed off the line by Robbie Middleby, then Alex Castro pierced the Wolves wall with a free kick which the goalkeeper moved smartly to save.

Wolves' pressure finally paid off a minute from half time. Matt Horsely took the ball down the right and Stuart Young, in an unaccustomed amount of free space, cracked his shot past Barney Smith.

Corry said that while the refereeing left a lot to be desired, it did not cost Wollongong the game as just as many of the decisions went against the Cosmos.

"The fact is we were not good enough to win tonight," he said. "We came up against a side that worked hard and played very well.

"This is the best wake-up call we could have had."

Milovanovic said he was generally pleased with the way his side had stepped up to beat one of the best teams in the country.

"The players grew a little bit and began to believe in themselves," he said. "I was disappointed at the soft goal we gave away but generally it was an excellent performance."

Andy Rakic: Canberra Cosmos tireless winger.

French striker, Sandrine Rouquet who will help pose stiff opposition to the rampaging Germans.

SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

Germany Guns for No. 4

Defending champions and Olympic bronze medallists Germany will be gunning for yet another European Championship title when they host the 8-nation finals event come June-July this year.

Last Thursday, the draw for the 2001 UEFA European Women's Championship was conducted in Ulm, the city in the south of Germany which will also play host to the semifinals and final. Germany plus Norway, the Olympic gold medallists, were the two seeded nations for the all-important draw.

The hosts are joined in Group A by Sweden, Russia, and England. Taking on Norway in Group B are France, Italy, and Denmark. Germany's clash with the Swedes, a replay of the 1995 final, will kick off proceedings.

Germany boasts an outstanding record in this the most significant of the world's regional championships, having won on three out of four occasions. They are expected to perform with the same mesmerising attack so evident at the Olympics. With a clash against Norway very likely in either the semis or the final, Germany will love nothing better than to avenge their 1-0 loss in the Olympic semi-finals.

Sweden have competed in every major European and world event since the beginning of time, yet were forced to playoff to reach this event after finishing second in their group behind France. Their experience and overall consistency leaves them up there as semifinal favourites.

GROUP A	GROUP B
Germany	Norway
Sweden	Italy
Russia	France
England	Denmark

Russia were the surprise find of the 1999 World Cup, playing with panache and maturity in their first appearance. The fairytale ended abruptly when they finished in 8th place on goal difference, therefore denying them a berth at the Olympics. Since that time, they have faded back into the background, but obviously remain a force after qualifying top of their group.

England can't seem to avoid the classy Germans, having also drawn with the old foes for the 2003 World Cup qualifiers which commence in September.

These Championships represent England's first major event since the 1995 World Cup, and they are more or less just happy to have reached the final eight.

Norway, European winners in 1995, later appeared to many to be losing ground on the rest of the world, before then bouncing back with perfect timing to claim no less than the Olympic 2000 gold medal.

Italy have a topsy-turvy history, obviously possessing the talent, but lacking the consistency over time at the highest levels. Their runners-up finish at the 1997 European Championships followed up by qualification for the 1999 World Cup cannot be dismissed.

France are the only side never to have played in a World Cup. Consequently, they drew much attention when they finished top of their group for the first time to automatically qualify for these finals.

Although drawing the same group as Norway, France hopes the fact they will play closer to the French border, will attract more supporters to their matches from home.

National Coach Elisabeth Loisel sees it as an advantage to be facing number one Norway in their opening fixture, it being an 'easier' time to cause an upset.

The newly resurgent France have the belief in themselves for further success, and are confident of 'at least a semifinal place'.

The 2001 event is the fifth European Championship since it was first played under that name in 1991.

Before that time, UEFA ran what was known as a European Competition for Women's Football. During 1989, it was granted official European Championship status, a name it couldn't claim until over half the European national associations participated in the competition.

As the unofficial championship, Sweden (1984), Norway (1987), and the Federal Republic of Germany (1989) claimed the crown.

The Germans then took out the inaugural official title in 1991, before Norway beat Italy to the trophy in 1993. Germany then became the first back-to-back victors by beating Sweden in 1995, then defeating Italy in 1997.

Promoted Balgownie Rangers Aim High

By John Economos

Balgownie Rangers Soccer Club, established back in 1883, and which today ranks as only one of the two oldest Soccer clubs in Australia, has been promoted back into the Premier League of the Illawarra Soccer Association this year.

And already this great historical Club has great ambitions in place on the drawing boards.

Balgownie's President, Mario Vescio and his industrious Committee, organised a hugely successful 'Season Launch' that was staged at the 'Fraternity Bowling and Recreational Club' at Fairy Meadow last Friday night.

Over 300 guests attended, and after they were wined and dined, Balgownie unveiled to them its new home and away playing strips.

Special guest of Honour was former Australian World Cup defender, Dougie Utjesenovic, a prominent member of the elite 1974 national team, (and the only Australian team to date), that has qualified to go to the World Cup Finals.

The Balgownie Soccer Club, together with Sydney side, Granville Soccer Club, remain as the two oldest clubs in Australia.

The former strapping striker cum midfielder of the Wollongong Wolves, now Balgownie's head coach Jock Morlando, stated to ABSW last Friday night at the Club's Season Launch: "Being our first season back in the first division, we will first be out to consolidate our position.

"We already have some real good players in our squad. We are hopeful it is going to be a team full of promising players.

"We've again been able to sign up former Marconi and former Australian international midfielder, Tommy McCulloch, and we have an exciting prospect in 20 year old striker Victor Constable," boasted Morlando.

The Illawarra region's long-serving Morlando, went on to add: "Victor has pace, composure and is a good finisher.

"We also have 21 year old Frank Barila another striker, that we've been able to get back from the Wollongong Wolves.

"A lot of good talent has come to this Club and our aim is to be stronger next year," envisages Morlando.

The always highly energised Morlando, who at the age of 39 is employed as a high-powered executive by Vizyboard, and already is the President on the Board of Directors of the large Fraternity Club at Fairy Meadow, ended by pledging: "Balgownie has a very long history and tradition. Together with my Committee, we want to inject much needed new energy into Balgownie and we have the strong desire to achieve something with this Club within the next two years," said Morlando.

Balgownie Committee man Vince Raschilla, informed ABSW attending the Balgownie Season Launch: "We are a very proud group at our Club. Balgownie already boasts having the second largest batch of Juniors in the region and in fact the current captain of the high-flying Wollongong Wolves, Matt Horsley, is a former Balgownie Junior.

"We fully intend on producing many more young stars," ended Raschilla.

Balgownie on Thursday night will play in the Final of the pre-season 'Fraternity Cup' against Bulli. Kick off has been set down for 8pm.

Former Australian World Cup defender, Dougie Utjesenovic, holding the 'Fraternity Cup' with Balgownie's head coach, Jock Morlando.

DYNAMIC DUO: Balgownie's captain Dominic Carlo with his coach Jock Morlando.

Glen Smede: Balgownie midfielder models new home strip.

The Balgownie Rangers Soccer Club.

Tommy McCulloch: Balgownie's playmaker with his sweetheart, Francis.

Belmore boils for Olympic, Strikers

By Arvind Hickman

Second placed Sydney Olympic will meet the Brisbane Strikers in a crucial game at Belmore Sports Ground this Sunday.

Olympic will aim to continue their unbeaten streak to seven games, but more importantly maintain their top two position on the NSL ladder, and keep the pressure on their closest rivals South Melbourne and the Wollongong Wolves.

Brisbane on the other hand will hope to build on a promising 4-2 victory against Sydney United last Sunday, and continue their gradual climb from the depths of the NSL table.

Olympic welcome back from injury their excellent scoring sweeper and Captain Ante Juric, as well as marksmen Dylan MacAllister, while Nick Carle and Greg Owens return from their most successful U-20 World Cup qualifying campaign.

Skipper Juric, believes the Brisbane encounter will be physical but vitally important in achieving Olympic's goal of a top two position for the season.

"They are definitely a strong outfit, very physical but I think we have the game to match that. They beat us in our last game so we have to make up for that and I think we play a lot better at home," he said.

"We are very confident coming off some good results and we know that we have to go on and keep winning for us to remain in the top two, which is our goal.

"The lads confidence is sky high and we are not at all complacent which is very good, and a positive attitude for the future.

The Strikers welcome back a wealth of talent and will almost be at full strength for the trip to Sydney.

Captain Stuart McLaren is quietly confident his chargers can ruffle the feathers of their more illustrious opponents. However he is wary that Olympic will be looking to extract revenge for their first round defeat.

"This is perhaps our strongest team all season as we are relatively injury free, with the exception of our experienced defender, Glenn Gwynne, who has unfortunately been out all season.

"Jeromy Harris and Paul Foster, both coming back from injuries played last Sunday, (against Sydney United), and both scored which was great to see. We also have Wayne Shroj and Jade North coming back from international duty.

"We are hoping for a good performance against one of the strongest sides and we know it will also be difficult playing at Belmore.

"We beat them in the first round so I'm sure they will feel that they have a score to settle, but we are fairly confident after a good victory last Sunday night.

"However we have a very difficult week ahead and we play Souths on Wednesday, (tomorrow), so we will have to play at the top of our game to get results.

A key match-up in this encounter will see Brisbane's tenacious Nick Meredith clash with Olympic's highly in-form right wingback, Lindsay Wilson.

Ante Juric: Olympic's scoring sweeper and inspirational captain.

Jon McKain: Brisbane strikers hard working midfielder.

Sydney Olympic vs Brisbane Strikers

Sunday 18th March

AT THE

BELMORE SPORTS GROUND

MAIN GAME — KICK OFF 6.30PM ● YOUTH LEAGUE 4.00PM

Branko Culina

Ante Juric

Clint Bolton

Dylan MacAllister

Shane Stefanutto

Stuart McLaren

John Kosmina

Sydney Olympic, *is proudly sponsored by* **DAINTREE RESTAURANT**

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ROUND 6

THUNDER MAKES A POINT

DANDENONG THUNDER 0
BULLEEN ZEBRAS 0

By David Davutovic

A barrage of long range efforts from Dandenong Thunder and in particular Daniel Radosevic saw the home side take their first points since round one with a nil-all draw against Bulleen Zebras.

Sampson Elmazi was coaching at home for the first time and the George Andrews Reserve faithful would have been impressed with what they saw.

Dandenongís most consistent player this season, Boris Ovcin, was released by David Terek before forcing Michael Theoklitos into an early save after hitting a powerful shot from a distance.

Evan Papadopoulos had the best opportunity of the half to open the scoring, as Ovcin and Radosevic both combined in the lead up, but Papadopoulos' shot was blocked.

Radosevic, who was not a regular starter under former coach Bobby McLachlan, had his third long-range attempt of the half as he again received the ball from deep and again letting rip from 25 metres but this time hitting the crossbar.

Bulleen were keen to turn the tables in the second half and Damien Gugliemi nearly produced the goods as he turned his marker in the 50th minute and shot into the side netting.

Terek was in the thick of it again, releasing Radosevic on the edge of the area that smashed the ball centimetres past the post.

The Zebras almost grabbed the winner in the 82nd minute after a goalmouth scramble with Kalamaris twice clearing off the line, initially from Lance Plunkett's header, and then Ahmet Gurpinar cleared.

Thunder's two young substitutes almost combined for the winner in stoppage time, as Veton Korcarevski found Fitim Ibraimi who again fired wide of the post.

Elmazi was delighted with the point, Dandenong's first at home this season, and was particularly pleased with the work rate of his players.

He has also promised to freshen up the squad as Fikret Korkaric has left to Oakleigh and David Grella is also considering offers from Oakleigh among other clubs.

"We have a Croatian international coming on Thursday, Goran Celig, and Idriz Pelja came today (Saturday), so they're all lining up next week. We also have a surprise international striker lined up," revealed Elmazi.

Bulleen coach Joe Mullen paid tribute to the Thunder's performance. "We came here for the win there's no doubt about that, but we came up against a resolute and well organised side," Mullen said.

"We've still got a lot of work to do, we have definitely got the quality. Certainly today we were second to the ball and it was one of our worst performances of the season, and ironically we picked up a point," Mullen said.

BERGERS STAY ON TOP

HEIDELBERG 1
PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS 0

By George Koukeris

Heidelberg stayed on top of the league after beating rival Port Melbourne Sharks 1-0 in front a 1000-strong crowd at Olympic Village last Sunday.

The Sharks played most of the second half with ten men after captain Peter Tsolakis was sent off in a spiteful match.

Referee Robert Josifoski dealt out six yellow cards as well as a red card. Sharks captain Peter Tsolakis was sent off after receiving yellow twice, one for a foul in the 24th minute and the second for dissent in the 48th minute.

Josifoski also lashed upon the Port bench in the 83rd minute. After consulting his linesman he ordered Sharks officials off the bench.

Alfonzo Opazo struck the winner for the Bergers in the 23rd minute.

right wing attack pushed the ball deep into the corner and after a poor defensive clearance the ball landed at the feet of Opazo, who finished it off.

Heidelberg's prolific striker and Nick Lazarevski were back after a two-week break, while Cameron Brown and George Georgiadis were excellent in midfield.

Port's strikers Nick Tsaltas and Peter Psarros searched for breaks in the Berger defence, while Arthur Tsirtsakis and Peter Tsolakis were busy in midfield.

But the Sharks, who started the season in blistering form, could find no path through the Berger defence and slumped to their second defeat to go third on the ladder.

• TOP SCORERS •

After Round 6

Player	Club	Goals
Peter Psarros	Port Melbourne Sharks	6
Juan Nilo	Bentleigh Greens	5
Alfonso Opazo	Heidelberg United	5
Nick Tsaltas	Port Melbourne Sharks	5
Tony Neceski	Green Gully	4

• RESULTS •

ROUND 6

Saturday 10 March 2001

Altona Magic	0	Fawkner Blues	0
Dandenong Thunder	0	Bulleen Zebras	0
Essendon Royals	0	Bentleigh Greens	3
		(Juan Nilo 2, Saso Markovski)	

Sunday 11 March 2001

Green Gully Cavaliers *(Tony Neceski 2, Nick Papadopoulos)*	3	Altona East Phoenix *(Paul Donnelly)*	1
Preston Lions	0	St Albans Saints	0
Heidelberg United *(Alfonso Opazo)*	1	Port Melb Sharks	0

Royals Plunge to Bottom

ESSENDON ROYALS 0
BENTLEIGH GREENS 3

League newcomer Essendon Royals slumped to their fifth loss in succession, plunging to the bottom of the ladder for the first time this year after going down 3-0 against a polished Bentleigh Greens at Epping Stadium last Saturday.

Two goals from Juan Nilo in the opening ten minutes and a third from Saso Markovski with just five minutes remaining saw last year's runner-up register its third victory of the season against the struggling Royals.

Essendon finished the match a player short. Defender Adem Kose was shown the red card in the 80th minute after committing a professional foul on his opponent running free towards goal.

With the first attack of the match, an unmarked Juan Nilo nodded Bentleigh ahead after just two minutes from a Craig Lewis cross.

Essendon found itself two goals down six minutes later after a goal mouth scramble. Nilo pounced on to a poor clearance and from close range the Bentleigh striker smashed home his second goal.

Bentleigh continued to dominate the match, while Essendon never looked like troubling the Greens defence, apart from a Ricky Diaco free kick that sailed over the crossbar.

Bentleigh continued to expose the ten-men Royals and and sealed the game with a third goal in the 86th minute. Substitute Markovski latched on to a loose ball, and drilled his shot into the back of the net from inside the penalty box.

VIC PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 6)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Heidelberg United	6	5	0	1	9	3	15
Altona East Phoenix	6	5	0	1	11	7	15
Port Melbourne Sharks	6	4	0	2	15	7	12
Bentleigh Greens	6	3	2	1	10	4	11
St. Albans Saints	5	3	1	1	10	5	10
Green Gully Cavaliers	6	3	0	3	11	11	9
Preston Lions	6	2	1	3	5	8	7
Fawkner Blues	6	1	3	2	5	8	6
Bulleen Zebras	5	1	2	2	6	6	5
Altona Magic	6	1	2	3	4	9	5
Dandenong Thunder	6	0	2	4	4	13	2
Essendon Royals	6	0	1	5	4	13	1

Victorian Premier League

ROUND 7

FRIDAY 16TH MARCH
Port Melbourne Sharks vs Essendon — S.S. Anderson Reserve
U21: 6.15pm • First Grade: 8.15pm

SATURDAY 17TH MARCH
Altona Magic vs Green Gully Cavaliers — Paisley Reserve
U21: 5.00pm • First Grade: 7.00pm

SUNDAY 18TH MARCH
Bentleigh Greens vs Altona East Phoenix — Kingston Heath SC
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm
St Albans Saints vs Heidelberg Utd — Churchill Reserve
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm
Fawkner Blues vs South Dandenong — C.B. Smith Reserve
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm

MONDAY 19TH MARCH
Bulleen Zebras vs Preston Lions — Veneto Club
U21: 6.15pm • First Grade: 8.15pm

For more information, log onto
www.soccervictoria.org.au

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XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
IPSW Knights	2	1	1	0	0	3	4
T'wmba Raiders	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Brisbane Lions	2	1	1	0	5	4	4
Brisbane City	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
B'Berg Waves	2	1	0	1	4	3	4
Gold Coast City	1	1	0	0	4	3	3
Wynnum	2	0	2	0	5	5	2
Taringa Rovers	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mt Gravatt	2	0	1	1	5	6	1
Rochedale Rovers	2	0	1	1	4	5	1
Pine Rivers Utd	2	0	1	1	5	8	1
Eastern Suburbs	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

ROUND 2

Brisbane Lions	4	Mt Gravatt	3
B'berg Waves	2	Brisbane City	3
T'wmba Raiders	3	Eastern Suburbs	1
Gold Coast City	0	Taringa Rovers	0
IPSW Knights	1	Rochedale Rov	1
Wynnum	3	Pine Rivers Utd	3

DIVISION 1 XXXX RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Rochedale Rovers	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Brisbane City	2	2	0	0	5	3	6
Wynnum	2	1	1	0	8	5	4
IPSW Knights	2	1	0	1	4	1	3
Eastern Suburbs	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
Brisbane Lions	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
B'berg Waves	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
T'wmba Raiders	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Mt Gravatt	2	0	1	1	4	6	1
Gold Coast City	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Taringa Rovers	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Pine Rivers Utd	2	0	0	2	2	9	0

ROUND 2

Brisbane Lions	3	Mt Gravatt	1
B'berg Waves	1	Brisbane City	2
T'wmba Raiders	0	Eastern Suburbs	3
Gold Coast City	0	Taringa Rovers	0
IPSW Knights	0	Rochedale Rov	1
Wynnum	5	Pine Rivers Utd	2

DIVISION 1 XXXX YOUTH

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Sunshine Coast	2	2	0	0	8	3	6
Wynnum	2	2	0	0	7	5	6
Taringa Rovers	1	1	0	0	5	3	3
Brisbane Lions	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Rochedale Rovers	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Gold Coast City	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
IPSW Knights	2	1	0	0	4	4	3
T'wmba Raiders	2	1	0	1	4	5	3
Mt Gravatt	1	0	0	1	4	5	0
Pine Rivers Utd	2	0	0	2	2	5	0
Brisbane City	2	0	0	2	2	6	0
Eastern Suburbs	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

ROUND 2

Brisbane Lions	0	Mt Gravatt	0
Sunshine Coast	4	Brisbane City	2
T'wmba Raiders	1	Eastern Suburbs	0
Gold Coast City	0	Taringa Rovers	0
IPSW Knights	1	Rochedale Rov	3
Wynnum	2	Pine Rivers Utd	1

DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Slacks Creek	3	3	0	0	12	2	9
The Gap	3	2	1	0	6	4	7
North Star	3	1	2	0	8	5	5
Redlands Utd	3	1	2	0	6	5	5
Brisbane Olympic Utd	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
Rocklea Utd	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Albany Creek	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
Newmarket	2	1	0	1	5	3	3
Grange Thistle	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
Mitchelton	3	1	0	2	4	7	3
Capalaba	3	0	2	1	4	7	2
Souths Utd	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Acacia Ridge	3	0	1	2	4	11	1
North Pine	3	0	0	3	1	6	0

ROUND 3

Mitchelton	1	Albany Creek	2
North Star	2	Acacia Ridge	2
North Pine	1	Newmarket	4
Brisbane Olympic Utd	0	Rocklea Utd	0
Redlands Utd	2	Grange Thistle	1
Slacks Creek	4	Capalaba	1
The Gap	2	Souths Utd	1

DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO Reserves

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Redlands Utd	3	3	0	0	9	2	9
Souths Utd	3	3	0	0	10	5	9
North Star	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
Slacks Creek	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Rocklea Utd	3	2	0	1	12	12	6
Mitchelton	3	1	1	1	7	3	4
The Gap	3	1	1	1	9	6	4
Albany Creek	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Brisbane Olympic Utd	3	1	0	2	9	8	3
Capalaba	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Newmarket	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Grange Thistle	3	1	0	2	4	10	3
North Pine	3	0	0	3	7	10	0
Acacia Ridge	3	0	0	3	0	10	0

ROUND 3

Mitchelton	1	Albany Creek	1
North Star	3	Acacia Ridge	0
North Pine	2	Newmarket	3
Brisbane Olympic Utd	2	Rocklea Utd	4
Redlands Utd	4	Grange Thistle	1
Slacks Creek	2	Capalaba	0
The Gap	2	Souths Utd	3

DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO Youth

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Souths Utd	3	3	0	0	18	3	9
Capalaba	3	3	0	0	15	2	9
Acacia Ridge	2	2	0	0	12	0	6
Redlands Utd	3	2	0	1	8	7	6
Newmarket	3	2	0	1	6	7	6
North Pine	3	1	1	1	6	5	4
Rocklea Utd	3	1	1	1	6	9	4
Brisbane Olympic Utd	3	1	0	2	5	8	3
Mitchelton	2	1	0	1	1	4	3
Slacks Creek	3	1	0	2	2	14	3
North Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Albany Creek	3	0	0	3	1	6	0
The Gap	2	0	0	2	3	9	0
Grange Thistle	3	0	0	3	2	11	0

ROUND 3

Mitchelton	1	Albany Creek	0
North Star	0	Acacia Ridge	0
North Pine	1	Newmarket	3
Brisbane Olympic Utd	0	Rocklea Utd	3
Redlands Utd	4	Grange Thistle	0
Slacks Creek	0	Capalaba	5
The Gap	2	Souths Utd	6

Caldwell walks out on Ipswich

By Glenn Davis

Ipswich Knights defender Ken Caldwell has stunned the club at the start of the local premier league season by walking out after an 18-year association with the club and Coalstars.

Caldwell 23, who was chosen to represent Queensland last year, quit because of the alleged "rubbish" that has occurred at the Bundamba-based club.

Caldwell recently said he would consider returning next season but only if things improved. He spent most of his career with Coalstars before the club amalgamated with St Helens to form the Ipswich Knights in the Queensland premier league.

The fearless defender now is playing for another Ipswich based side, the Ipswich City Bulls in amateur division one.

"I'm sick of all the rubbish. I'm sick of all the garbage in general,"

Caldwell said in a recent article." Everybody's equal at the Bulls."

It appears equality is the major reason for Caldwell's departure which surprised coach Frank Pimblett.

Pimblett and Ipswich Knights secretary David O'Leary were disappointed to lose Caldwell."Life goes on but it's difficult to believe a guy picked in the Queensland squad last year has gone to play (amateur) division one soccer," O'Leary said.

Caldwell has accepted it will be hard to retain his Queensland jersey while playing in the lower ranks.

"You haven't got to play for Queensland to show you are talented," he said.

"There are players at the Bulls who are better than players at the Knights," he said.

"I don't care where I play as long as I enjoy my soccer.I'm doing up my house and going back to shift work. All my mates are at the Bulls so it should be an enjoyable year."

QLD PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

A hattrick from rookie striker Anthony Roche wasn't enough to give Wynnum Wolves their first premier league win of the season in a thrilling 3-all draw with Pine Rivers at Perry Park on Saturday night.

Wynnum coach Peter Tokesi had no hesitation declaring his side had got out of jail despite the scores being locked 1-all at half time.

Pine Rivers, promoted to the premier league after several years in the lower ranks, opened the scoring through striker Dean Almond midway through the opening period despite Wynnum having the better share of possession.

Roche, who was used sparingly up front last season after playing mostly in midfield, got the first of his hattrick on the half hour when he ran from halfway with two defenders in hot pursuit before slotting home.

Pine Rivers, who were downed 5-2 by Ipswich Knights in their season opener, hit the front again when Adam Kinsella drove home from 20 metres in the 60th minute .

The league newcomers then took a commanding 3-1 lead ten minutes later when Lou Harris scored following a costly fumble from Wynnum keeper Garth McCulloch.

With ten minutes remaining Wynnum gained an enormous confidence booster reducing the deficit to 3-2 after Roche raced on to a through ball and rounded Pine Rivers' keeper Peter Underhill to score his second.

Wynnum's never-say-die attitude was rewarded with just three minutes left when Underhill punched a clearance out to Wynnum's Scott Rocker whose shot was deflected by Roche into the net for the equaliser.

Tokesi said his side had its chances but conceded Pine Rivers were unlucky not to come away with maximum points.

Pine Rivers coach Steve Dolan was happy with his side's performance but believes his players must learn how to keep a lead in the future.

"We got into a position at 3-1 and should have won it from there," Dolan said.

"We can't afford to let games slip like that and just sit back on a lead.

Fellow league newcomers Easts continued to find the going tough in the premier league going down 3-1 away to Toowoomba for their second straight defeat.

Toowoomba striker Colin Hackwood struck a first half double to give his side a deserved 2-nil lead at the break while Jason Bosward netted for the home side's third goal.

Easts midfielder Gerard Brown replied with the Tigers only goal in the 80th minute.

Easts coach Jim Byrne had built a strong team over three years in the semi-pro division but has virtually had to start rebuilding again this year after losing the bulk of his squad.

"Over ther last three years we've built a reasonable squad but I had only two of those players for our first game which we lost 2-nil to Bundaberg," Byrne said.

Byrne blamed two costly defensive mistakes for allowing Hackwood to score his double which put Toowoomba in a relatively safe zone for the remainder of the match.

"They took their chances well but the first two were gifts after we made mistakes," he said.

"We had our chances to score but didn't take them including hitting the crossbar twice."

Brisbane City escaped with a 3-2 away win against Bundaberg after leading two-nil at half time following a double from striker Mark Battistin.

Bundaberg returned fired after the break to level through Jason Chapman and Axel Lorenz before Pablo Aviles drove home the match winner for Brisbane City with ten minutes remaining.

In other games Brisbane Lions were given a huge fright at home before narrowly beating Mt Gravatt 4-3, Ipswich drew 1-all with Rochedale Rovers while heavy rain washed out the clash between Taringa and the Gold Coast.

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE

FIXTURES ROUND 3

Saturday 17th March

Rochedale Rovers v Wynnum	7.00pm
Eastern Suburbs v Gold Coast	7.00pm
Mt Gravatt v Pine Rivers	6.00pm
Taringa Rovers v IPSW Knights	7.30pm

Sunday 18th March

Brisbane City v TBA Raiders	2.45pm
Brisbane Lions v B'berg Waves	4.00pm

TRENT McCLENAHAN: AN AUSSIE HAMMER

By Mark Stavroulakis

'A West End Kid', that's the name given to young Parramatta Power star Trent McClenahan.

At the tender age of 15, young McClenahan is embarking on a huge adventure, and that's tackling the big boys overseas.

Last week, young Trent received news that West Ham were interested in signing the young Aussie on a 3-year scholarship, something of a life long dream for the lucky Chipping Norton lad.

McClenahan started off his young career at Sydney Olympic, where he enjoyed much success at the club.

"Through my 3 years playing for Olympic, we won almost every title and gained a high status as an unbeatable side. The team we had from the U13's right through to the U15's was excellent as we had some good talent in the squad. The Super Youth League was a learning experience for myself and I was guided by some great coaches who taught me many aspects, to help improve my game," said the former Olympic star.

The young sweeper attracted the attention of the NSW state squads and it was only a matter of time until he represented his state at National level, also captaining the side was an amazing honour for the youngster.

"I was selected to play for NSW in the U13, 14 ad 15's where I enjoyed much success there.

Gaining captaincy in all three years was something of shock to me. I thrived on the opportunity and did the best that I could to lead the side, which had many quality players. Winning the U15's Nationals at Parklea last year was my biggest achievement as we went through the whole tournament undefeated.

It was two years of hard work that paid off and that was all thanks to NSW coach Glenn Fontana who kept the squad together. It was also great for my own career as after the National Titles were over, scouts from overseas clubs had watched me play and offered me trials which was a great experience," said the former Westfield's Sports High student.

After his success at Olympic, Trent thought it was time to move onto a more professional set-up and Parramatta Power had the pleasure of signing up this exciting young defender. "At the start of this season, Olympic offered me a Colts contract, and the Power offered me a youth contract as an apprentice.

"I chose the Power as it was a much more professional set-up, and the facilities were of high class. Also the fact that playing in the reserve team rather than the colts team also appealed to me greatly," said the Power star.

The young sweeper had signed an amateur contract as an apprentice for a year and had benefits of training with the first team and playing almost every week in the National Youth League.

"Training with the likes of Tobin, Lee, Orlic and the rest of the Power lads was a valuable experience. They gave me a few tips on how to improve my game, which was great.

I had also played 20 odd games for the club and noticed the huge step from Super Youth League level to National Youth League level.

Trent McClenahan: Sydney Olympic's young gun now bound for West Ham.

The speed, technical and physical side of the game was immensely different to what I was used to, but it helped me become a better player.

Currently our squad boasts the youngest line-up compared to any other youth side in the league apart from the NSWIS.

We have had many youngsters like Biggins, Roodenburg and Santalab break into the first team squads, which has been a good sign of developing in the club.

So far we have done well and sit second on the table, also with help from our coach Grant Lee, who knows how far our squad can go?' said McClenahan.

Trent will however see out the rest of his final Power season and then venture onto greener pastures in Europe after a successful trial period at English Premier League side, West Ham. "After the U15 Nationals were over last year, a scout from West Ham approached me and offered me a 3-week trial period in September.

"Through my three weeks at West Ham, there was a massive fuel strike that hit the nation and cancelled most of my trial games at the club. West Ham invited me back in mid January for a month to have a last look at me and to hopefully see me play more games. In that period I played eight games and impressed the people there, finally gaining a 3-year scholarship at the club. I stayed at Romford at a place called 'The Digs' where all young international players stay whilst they trial at West Ham.

The place was full of young guys from overseas clubs. 'The Digs' was only five minutes away from the training and ground facilities at Upton Park. The facilities at West Ham are also of top quality, with top pitches, Astro-Turf field, weights and gym centre, it's all of professional standard. Training is also of top quality and I'll never forget the day I trained with the first grade. I had missed a game with the U17's and was asked to train the next day and little did I know it was with the big guys. Seeing Di Canio, Cole, Carrick play in front of me was amazing," said the future Hammer.

McClenahan is not the only Australian-based player at West Ham, with the likes of Steve Laurie, Michael Ferrante and Ritchie Garcia; the Aussie contingent is brimming at Upton Park.

Registered as an U17 West Ham player, Trent will do what he can in working his way up in attaining the ultimate goal, a first grade contract.

Young McClenahan will depart Australian shores in early July and embark on his life long dream which is to become a professional soccer player in one of the toughest leagues in the world.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

SOUTHERN DIVISION - RD 20

LEADING SCORERS

Name	Team	Goals
Steve Manceski	South Melbourne	25
Nick Waite	Carlton Peninsula Blues	14
Denis Mustac	Eastern Pride	12
Brett Cunningham	Fawkner Blues	10
Veton Korcarevski	South Dandenong	10
Aref El Dib	South Melb. Eagles Ac	10
Carlo Melina	Carlton Peninsula Blues	9
Viktor Memeti	South Dandenong	9

LEAGUE LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eastern Pride	18	15	1	2	60	11	46
South Melb Institute	17	15	0	2	92	20	45
Melbourne Knights	17	12	0	5	51	20	36
VIS	20	11	3	6	48	32	36
Peninsula Blues	17	11	1	5	46	21	34
Melbourne Knights Aca	17	9	1	7	21	24	28
South Dandenong	17	7	3	7	31	32	24
South Melb. Eagles Ac	17	7	1	9	26	36	22
Green Gully Cavaliers	18	5	4	9	23	33	19
Bulleen Zebras	18	3	4	11	24	51	13
Albury Wodonga	18	3	3	12	16	49	12
Fawkner Blues	17	3	1	13	20	56	10
Preston Lions	17	2	0	15	17	90	6

By Roy Hay

VIS 6
Preston Lions 0

In a match brought forward from Round 23 the Victorian Institute of Sport beat Preston Lions by six goals to nil.

There was only one goal in a competitive first half and that went to Serkan Oksuz in 24 minutes, but the game was turned upside down by a Ricky Chillico hat-trick inside eleven minutes, starting in 57 minutes and following up with goals in 65 and 68. Ibrahim Ibraimi added the fifth goal in 72 minutes and Billy Celeski's goal in 75 rounded out the scoring.

VIS coach Aaron Healey said, 'We ran over them in the second half.'

Fawkner Blues 0
Eastern Pride 3

It took league leader Eastern Pride over an hour to subdue a plucky Fawkner Blues eventually getting on top for a three-nil win. Denis Mustac opened the scoring in 66 minutes and Matt McDermott in 74 and Craig Elvin in 77 scored the others. New coach Michael Kupresak has made a difference to the young Blues who battled hard all day, none better than defender Nicholas Pantelidis who was outstanding.

South Melbourne 1
Green Gully Cavaliers 0

A single goal by Aref El Dib gave South Melbourne Eagles Academy its narrow win over Green Gully Cavaliers.

That came in the 34th minute and when the Cavaliers were reduced to ten men it seemed that the advantage would lie with the Eagles. But Green Gully lifted and hit the post late in the game as it went all out for an equalizer. Ivan Mioc in midfield playing just behind the strikers was the man of the match for the Eagles. El Dib's goalscoring feats have earned him a call up to join the senior squad at Keilor Park.

Melbourne Knights 0
Melbourne Knights 1

In a big boil over the Melbourne Knights Academy beat its Youth side by a goal to nil at Knights Stadium on Sunday night. There was one of the closest matches of the year for both teams and it was settled by Dario Matkovic's goal for the Academy after only 13 minutes.

ROUND 20 RESULTS

Saturday 10 March 2001
South Melbourne Eagles Acad 1 (Aref El Dib) Green Gully 0
Fawkner Blues 0 Eastern Pride 3 (Denis Mustac, Matt McDermott, Craig Elvin)

VIS 6 (Ricky Chillico 3, Serkan Oksuz, Ibrahim Ibraimi, Billy Celeski)
Preston Lions 0

(Match brought forward from Round 23)
Sunday 11 March 2001
Melbourne Knights 0 Melbourne Knights Academy 1 (Dario Matkovic)
South Dandenong 3 (Josip Radosevic 2, own goal) Albury-Wodonga 1 (Simon Vesicio)

Wednesday 14 March 2001
Bulleen Zebras v South Melbourne
(C B Smith Reserve, 7 pm)

Bye v VIS
Bye v Preston Lions
Bye v Peninsula Blues

ROUND 21 FIXTURES

Friday 16 March 2001
Melbourne Knights Academy v Preston Lions,
(Knights Stadium, 7.30 pm)
Saturday 17 March 2001
Eastern Pride v Melbourne Knights,
(Mobil Park, 4 pm)
V I S v Fawkner Blues,
(The Grange Reserve, 4 pm)

Sunday 18 March 2001
Albury-Wodonga v South Melbourne Eagles Academy,
(Greenfield Park, 4 pm)
Monday 19 March 2001
South Melbourne v Peninsula Blues,
(Bob Jane Stadium, 7 pm)
Bye v Green Gully
Bye v South Dandenong
Bye v Bulleen Zebras

NORTHERN DIVISION - RD 22

Sydney United .....1 NSWIS 2

FRIDAY 9 MARC H 2001
Newcastle United Youth .....0 AIS 1
Parramatta Power v Marconi Stallions Colts

SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2001
Canberra Cosmos .....0 Wollongong Wolves ...4
Northern Spirit .....5 ACT Academy 1

SUNDAY 11 MARCH 2001
QAS .....3 Sydney United 0
Sydney Olympic Aca. .....2 Sydney O. Youth 2
Marconi Stallions Youth v Newcastle United Colts
Bye - NSWIS

ROUND 23 FIXTURES

United Youth, 5:00pm WIN Stadium
NSWIS Vs Marconi Stallions Youth, 6:30pm Valentine Sports Park
Sydney United Vs Parramatta Power, 4:00pm
Sydney United Sports Centre
AIS Vs ACT Academy, 7:00pm AIS Soccer Field
Marconi Stallions Colts Vs Canberra Cosmos, 5:00pm
Marconi Stadium
Sydney Olympic Youth Vs QAS, 4:00pm Belmore Sports Ground Sun
Newcastle United Colts Vs Sydney Olympic Academy, 4:00pm Ray Watt
Oval BYE Northern Spirit
Northern Spirit Vs QAS 7:15pm Christie Park
NSWIS Vs Wollongong Wolves 7:00pm Valentine Park
Marconi Stallions Colts Vs Marconi Stallions Youth 6.30pm
Marconi Stadium
AIS Vs Sydney Olympic Academy 5.00pm AIS Soccer Field

	P	W	D	B	L	F	A	Pts
A.I.S.	21	17	3	1	1	58	22	54
Parramatta Power	20	13	2	1	5	59	30	41
Marconi Stallions	17	12	2	1	3	40	12	39
Northern Spirit	20	12	3	1	5	45	27	39
Newcastle United	19	11	2	1	6	38	23	35
Wollongong Wolves	19	10	4	2	5	41	20	34
Sydney Olympic	19	9	3	2	7	45	38	30
Sydney United	21	9	1	2	11	40	42	28
Marconi Stallions Colts	18	9	0	2	9	38	31	27
N.S.W.I.S.	21	8	3	2	10	27	44	27
Q.A.S.	21	8	1	1	12	33	52	25
Canberra Cosmos	20	7	3	2	10	40	38	24
Sydney Olympic Aca	20	2	5	1	13	24	47	11
Newcastle United Colts	18	2	0	2	15	12	47	6
ACT Academy	21	1	2	1	18	11	75	5

NSW Premier League

ROUND 17

PANTHERS CLIP EAGLE'S WINGS

Parramatta	2
Penrith	3

By Patrick Galloway

The football gods were shining on the Penrith Panthers at Melita Stadium last Sunday night, as Stan Ackerly's men held off a second-half charge from Parramatta to win their second game of the season 3-2, leaving Parramatta positioned precariously in second position on the Premier League ladder with just one round remaining.

A quarter of an hour into the match the heavens opened, and so did the floodgates. Penrithís Luke Boyd was the first to score, he capitalised on some lacklustre Parramatta marking in the box to head home right on 17 minutes, giving the Panthers a surprise 1-0 lead.

The away side didn't stop there though and ten minutes later former Eagle Glenn Meilak delightfully chipped Holmes after substitute Danny Hinton had shown great strength to hold the ball up in the Melita area and then lay off to Meilak, who hit the ball first time with deft precision into the top left-hand-corner.

Up 2-0, Penrith were brought back to earth not long later when "keeper Ivan Necevski was left ruing his decision to come out to take a Tony Mittiga cross from the left – Necevski was beaten to the ball by Parramatta flanker Ben Delicata, who toe-poked the cross into a vacant net.

As quickly as the Eagles had got back within one goal, the margin was pushed back out to two again. This time it was talented forward Tim O'Connell who did well to turn and chip Jason Holmes after a goal-mouth scramble in the mud. It was the game's fourth goal in just 23 minutes.

Notably Holmes was substituted early in the second half after succumbing to a head injury sustained in that clash with Tim O'Connell - when he scored the Pantherís third goal. Holmes was later taken to Hospital for precautionary tests, with it still unknown whether he will be given a clearance to take part in Parramatta's all-important clash next week against Belconnen.

In the second half the Panthers chose to shut-up-shop, leaving Danny Hinton to fend for himself up front. Hinton was one of the shining lights for the Panthers as they gallantly held out countless Parramatta raids on goal – which became more frequent as the match wore on.

Despite a goal to Adam Anderson in the 64th minute the Panthers left Melita Stadium with their second win in 17 matches.

And yes, they did remember the words to the victory song – of which a very loud rendition took place in the Melita change rooms not long after the match's conclusion.

Penrith recorded their second victory of the season against Parramatta Eagles at Melita Stadium on a wet Sunday night.

SHOCK – BONNYRIGG EXORCISE DEMONS

Bonnyrigg	3
Blacktown City	0

By Don O'Regan

A combination of hard work, swift and skilful counterattacking, the intervention of the referee and a lackluster Blacktown City performance saw the Bonnyrigg White Eagles run out worthy 3-0 winners against the current Premiers at the Serbian Centre last Saturday evening.

Having settled down under new coach Greg Woodhouse the White Eagles were superior to their visitors in almost all departments and didn't seem to miss the towering Borislav Dragas, currently trialling overseas with Red Star Belgrade.

A dejected City coach, Brian Brown, commented after the game, 'Obviously I'm disappointed but Bonnyrigg worked a lot harder than us. We showed a lack of discipline and, to be fair, probably didn't deserve to win the game."

Although not obvious at the time, a somewhat harsh yellow card given to City captain Damon Langan in only the second minute would have a great bearing on the result later in the match. Nine minutes after the break Langan was fairly booked for obstruction and, as it was his second yellow, he had to leave the field of play.

The Demons were already a goal behind when the send-off occurred after a long cross from David Reid was rifled home in the 16th minute by David Harding. Just after half-time Ben Willard missed a great opportunity to equalise for City but he smashed his shot over the bar and, with the send-off following a few minutes later, it was always going to be a struggle for the competition leaders from this moment on.

Bonnyrigg took full advantage of the situation in the 58th minute when they exploited the extra room and spare man and launched a swift counterattack after a Blacktown raid had broken down.

Receiving the ball wide on the right, Devrim Huseyin galloped down the wing unchallenged and his cross to the edge of the area found the unmarked Chris Bradley who banged the ball home.

The goal was even sweeter for Bradley after he left the demons for the white Eagles at round six of the current season.

The final nail in the disjointed Blacktown Coffin was hammered in the 72nd minute after the tricky Javier Mancino made space and fed the ball to the ubiquitous Michael Hawrysiuk.

He in turn picked out Robert Gomez who steadied himself before ramming in Bonnyrigg's third and final goal of a predominantly one-sided affair.

Whilst Bonnyrigg have recovered from some patchy form around Christmas to secure third place, the Demons can still wrap up the title this week when they entertain Canterbury Marrickville at Gabbie Stadium on Saturday evening.

Javier Mancino: Bonnyrigg's Captain was instrumental in their third goal.

WRAP-UP

CANTERBURY 4 SUTHERLAND 1

Canterbury kept their faint semi final's hopes alive with a comprehensive 4-1 victory over Sutherland at Henson Park.

The Berries looked the likely winners right from the start when Aheleas Kotsopoulos set the tone with a goal in just the second minute. John Pillemer doubled the advantage fifteen minutes later before Sutherland came back into the match in the later stages of the opening stanza.

The Sharks were rewarded for the endeavour with a goal to Goce Trposki seconds before half time. However hopes of a Sharks comeback were short-lived as Andy Amegashie scored just three minutes after the interval.

The Liberian scored his second late in the game and with further chances going begging at either end the 4-1 scoreline remained unchanged.

LEICHHARDT 0 BELCONNEN 2

Belconnen were the more determined side in their crucial encounter with Leichhardt Tigers, coming out deserved 2-0 winners.

The Tigers defence had more holes than a Swiss cheese in the first quarter hour, with Blue Devils attackers Steve Lazzari and Geoff Howarth twice catching the Tigers defence badly out of position.

After just four minutes Steve Lazzari side footed home easily after Howarth drew two opponents before knocking across a square ball, while just ten minutes later it was Howarth's turn with a clinical finish after he and Lazzari interchanged passes.

Belconnen played the game out like an away cup-tie, defending stoutly and allowing the Tigers few chances to get back into the game.

CENTRAL COAST 1 ST GEORGE 1

The Coasties are still in there fighting after a gallant 1-1 draw over St George at Pluim Park.

In a see-sawing match which had Central Coast on top for long periods, a win was needed more by the Coast who led from a powerful shot by Mick Williams in the 7th minute which took a wicked deflection off Bill Petrovski to deceive Stacy Alogdellis completely.

Saints broke back in the 33rd when Angelo Petratos ran onto a pass from Max Sevares and with home defenders appealing for offside the veteran lobbed the ball over the advancing Darren Moore for the equaliser, with some expertise.

Coast went close twice soon after the restart when first Shane Knight hit the bar and then another effort came off the post, but as Saints broke many times near the end, Petratos squandered several heading opportunities before Bacek had the best chance of all to win the game.

• RESULTS •

ROUND 15

Canterbury	4	Sutherland	1
(Aheleas Kotsopoulos 2 John Pillemer 17, Andy Amegashie 48, 75)		*(Goce Trposki 45)*	
Leichhardt	0	Belconnen	2
		(Lazzari 4', Howarth 15')	
Central Coast	1	St George	1
(M Williams 7m)		*(A Petratos 32m)*	
Parramatta	2	Penrith	3
(B Delicata 39m Anderson 64m)		*(L Boyd 17m G Meilak 28m, T O'Connell 40m)*	
Bonnyrigg	3	Blacktown	0
(Harding 17m, Bradley 58m, Gomez 71m)			

• TOP SCORERS •

AFTER ROUND 15

Player	Club	Goals
Darren Iocca	Blacktown City Demons	14
Steve Lazzari	Belconnen Blue Devils	14
Jim Aschner	Blacktown City Demons	9
Javier Mancino	Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9
Matthew Borg	Leichhardt Tigers	9
Adam Anderson	Parramatta Eagles	9

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 17)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City	17	12	3	2	45	23	39
Parramatta	17	11	1	5	42	29	34
Bonnyrigg	17	9	5	3	42	21	32
St George	17	8	2	7	27	29	26
Canterbury	17	7	4	6	29	26	25
Belconnen	17	7	3	7	30	29	24
Leichhardt	17	7	2	8	37	35	23
Central Coast	17	7	2	8	19	23	23
Penrith	7	2	3	12	14	41	9
Sutherland	17	0	5	12	11	40	5

For further information see: www.nswpremierleague.com

NSW Premier League

www.nswpremierleague.com

ROUND 18

SATURDAY 17-MAR

St George Saints v Bonnyrigg White Eagles — ST GEORGE STADIUM
Under 19s: 5:00 PM — First Grade: 7:00 PM

Penrith Panthers v Central Coast Coasties — ANDREWS ROAD PARK
Under 19s: 5:00 PM — First Grade: 7:00 PM

Blacktown City v Canterbury Marrickville — GABBIE STADIUM
Under 19s: 5:00 PM — First Grade: 7:00 PM

Sutherland Sharks v Leichhardt Tigers — SEYMOUR SHAW
Under 19s: 5:00 PM — First Grade: 7:00 PM

Belconnen v Parramatta Eagles — WEST BELCONNEN SPORTS GD
Under 19s: 5:00 PM — First Grade: 7:00 PM

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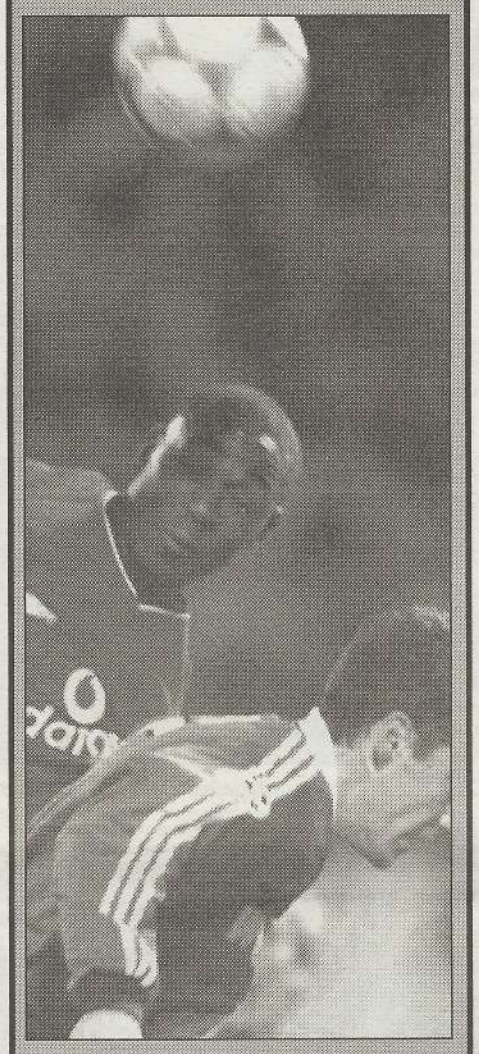
WORLD

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GROUP A



Manchester United Andy Cole (top) goes for an aerial ball with Panathinaikos' Fernando Galetto.

Wednesday, March 7

Sturm Graz	**0**	**Valencia**	**5**
Panathinaikos	**1**	**Manchester Utd**	**1**

Table

Valencia	5	2	3	0	8	1	9
Manchester United	5	2	3	0	7	3	9
Sturm Graz	5	2	0	3	4	10	6
Panathinaikos	5	0	2	3	3	8	2

● Valencia have qualified for the quarter-finals

Past Results:

Tuesday, November 21

Valencia	2	Sturm Graz	0
Manchester Utd	3	Panathinaikos	1

Wednesday, December 6

Panathinaikos	0	Valencia	0
Sturm Graz	0	Manchester Utd	2

Wednesday, February 14

Sturm Graz	2	Panathinaikos	0
Valencia	0	Manchester Utd	0

Tuesday, Febuary 20

Panathinaikos	1	Sturm Graz	2
Manchester Utd	1	Valencia	1

Remaining Fixtures:

Tuesday, March 13
Valencia v Panathinaikos
Manchester United v Sturm Graz

GROUP B

Wednesday, March 7

Galatasaray	**2**	**AC Milan**	**0**
Deportivo Coruna	**4**	**PSG**	**3**

Table

Galatasaray	5	3	1	1	6	4	10
Deportivo Coruna	5	3	0	2	9	6	9
AC Milan	5	1	3	1	5	6	6
PSG	5	0	2	3	6	10	2

● Galatasaray have qualified for the quarter-finals

Past Results:

Tuesday, November 21

AC Milan	2	Galatasaray	2
Paris St Germain	1	Deportivo Coruna	3

Wednesday, December 6

Deportivo Coruna	0	AC Milan	1
Galatasaray	1	PSG	0

Wednesday, February 14

Galatasaray	1	Deportivo Coruna	0
AC Milan	1	PSG	1

Tuesday, February 20

Deportivo Coruna	2	Galatasaray	0
PSG	1	AC Milan	1

Remaining Fixtures:

Tuesday, March 13
AC Milan v Deportivo Coruna
Paris St Germain v Galatasaray

AC Milan's skipper, Paolo Maldini looks dejected after his team's loss to Galatasaray.

GROUP C

Arsenal striker, Thierry Henry celebrating his late header which defeated Spartak Moscow.

Tuesday, March 6

Olympique Lyon	**3**	**Bayern Munich**	**0**
Arsenal	**1**	**Spartak Moscow**	**0**

Table

Bayern Munich	5	3	1	1	7	5	10
Arsenal	5	2	2	1	6	7	8
Olympique Lyon	5	2	1	2	7	3	7
Spartak Moscow	5	1	0	4	4	9	3

Past Results:

Wednesday, November 22

Bayern Munich	1	Olympique Lyon	0
Spartak Moscow	4	Arsenal	1

Tuesday, December 5

Arsenal	2	Bayern Munich	2
Olympique Lyon	3	Spartak Moscow	0

Tuesday, February 13

Olympique Lyon	0	Arsenal	1
Bayern Munich	1	Spartak Moscow	0

Wednesday, February 21

Arsenal	1	Olympique Lyon	1
Spartak Moscow	0	Bayern Munich	3

Remaining Fixtures:

Wednesday, March 14
Bayern Munich v Arsenal
Spartak Moscow v Olympique Lyon

GROUP D

Tuesday, March 6

Real Madrid	**3**	**Leeds United**	**2**
Lazio	**2**	**Anderlecht**	**1**

Table

Real Madrid	5	4	1	0	14	7	13
Leeds United	5	3	0	2	9	7	9
Lazio	5	1	1	3	6	8	4
Anderlecht	5	1	0	4	5	12	3

● Read Madrid and Leeds United have qualified for the quarter-finals

Past Results:

Wednesday, November 22

Leeds United	0	Real Madrid	2
Anderlecht	1	Lazio	0

Tuesday, December 5

Lazio	0	Leeds United	1
Real Madrid	4	Anderlecht	1

Tuesday, February 13

Real Madrid	3	Lazio	2
Leeds United	2	Anderlecht	1

Wednesday, February 21

Lazio	2	Real Madrid	2
Anderlecht	1	Leeds United	4

Remaining Fixtures:

Wednesday, March 14
Leeds United v Lazio
Anderlecht v Real Madrid

Quarterfinals: 1st legs: April 3/4
2nd legs: April 17/18
Semifinals: 1st legs: May 1/2
2nd legs: May 8/9
Final:
San Siro, Milan, May 23, 2001

Raul: His two goals helped Real Madrid to victory over Leeds.

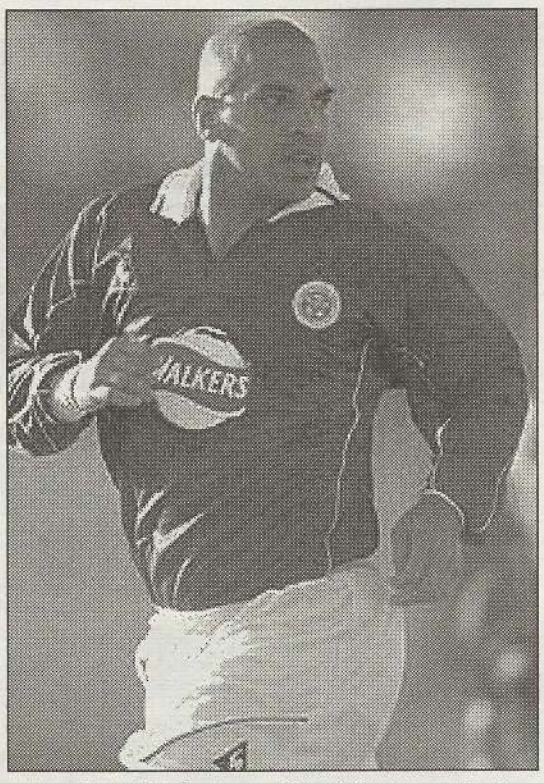
Oviedo rejects Collymore's retirement move

Real Oviedo said last week, they knew nothing of reports suggesting Stan Collymore had retired from football, saying the player had returned to England because of a family problem.

"Stan has returned to England because his partner is pregnant and there was a problem," the spokesman said on Wednesday.

"We deal with reality rather than rumours. We expect the player to be back in Oviedo tomorrow morning."

Collymore joined the Spanish First Division club at the end of January on an 18-month contract after a free transfer from English Premier League Bradford City.



Troubled British player, Stan Collymore, who is now mired in a retirement controversy

Mancini gets nod for Fiorentina job

Former Lazio striker Roberto Mancini was cleared to coach Fiorentina last week just hours after soccer officials said he could not take the job.

Mancini's hopes of taking over at the Serie A club were initially undermined when an Italian Football Federation (FIGC) technical committee ruled he was ineligible because he had already worked as an assistant coach under Sven Goran Eriksson at Lazio this season.

Under federation rules Serie A and B coaches are not allowed to switch clubs in mid-season. The idea is to prevent managers jumping ship when their club hits trouble or a better job comes along.

But the rules said nothing about assistant coaches and the technical committee urged the introduction of new guidelines to resolve cases like Mancini's.

The committee recommended waiting until the end of the season to change the rules but FIGC's acting president Gianni Petrucci decided to act immediately.

"He looked at the committee's recommendations and thought 'Why not change the statutes now?'," a FIGC spokesman said.

"Italy is the only country in Europe where an assistant coach cannot take over at one club if he is already registered at another."

"However, the rule will still apply for full coaches. We still have a ban on a situation where, for example, a coach like Eriksson leaves Lazio in mid-season and goes straight to Juventus."

Roberto Mancini: Gets the go-ahead at Fiorentina

UN job for Zidane

The United Nations Development Programme said it would make World Footballer of the Year Zinedine Zidane a goodwill ambassador in the drive to end global poverty.

It said the France and Juventus star, whose parents were both Algerian, would be officially appointed to the post on March 19.

Other goodwill ambassadors include Brazilian footballer Ronaldo, a member of the national team that lost to the French side captained by Zidane in the 1998 Soccer World Cup final.

Other UNDP goodwill ambassadors are U.S. actor Danny Glover, South African Nobel Prize-winning novelist Nadine Gordimer and Japanese actress Misako Kono.

Zinedine Zidane

Kanchelskis eyes Russian comeback

Manchester City winger Andrei Kanchelskis says he wants to return to the Russian national side, two years after being dropped by coach Oleg Romantsev.

"I feel that I can be helpful to Oleg Romantsev's team and if I was told 'Andrei, come and play' I will", Kanchelskis, 32, said in Wednesday's edition of Sovietsky Sport newspaper.

Kanchelskis had a row with Romantsev at the Euro 96 finals in England and was dropped by the coach shortly after he took over again as Russia's boss in 1999.

But he said he had a change of heart after watching another Ukrainian-born player, Yuri Nikiforov, make his national team comeback after a three-year absence against Greece last month.

Russia, who lead European qualifying group one with two wins from two matches, play two home World Cup qualifiers against Slovenia and the Faroe Islands on March 24 and 28.

Kanchelskis, who has played more than 60 times for Russia, has not always seen eye to eye with officialdom. He led the players' revolt against then Russia coach Pavel Sadyrin just before the 1994 World Cup finals in the United States.

After the Russian soccer federation backed Sadyrin, seven top players, including Kanchelskis, boycotted the tournament.

Kanchelskis

"Seven years ago I refused to play for Russia in the World Cup finals," he said. "As a result the national team and myself both lost out. Now I can say that decision was a mistake. I'm ready to return to the national team."

'ENGLAND GOALIES ARE TOO OLD'

England goalkeepers David Seaman and David James have been criticised as too old and not good enough respectively by their illustrious predecessor Gordon Banks.

Banks, goalkeeper in the 1966 World Cup-winning side, told a news conference he believed Nigel Martyn was the best of the current crop.

"David Seaman has done a great job but he is just past his best," he said. "When you get older you get a bit tight and lose some of you flexibility and I think that is what is happening to David.

"Nigel Martyn is the best but after him I think we are really struggling. I am not a great lover of David James, he's not quite got the class as yet."

Banks was talking ahead of the auction of a collection of soccer memorabilia at Christies on March 23, at which his 1966 World Cup winner's medal will be sold.

"It will be a very sad day," he said. "Receiving that medal from the Queen was the proudest moment of my life.

"But I have three children, Robert, Wendy and Julia, and I can't split the medal between them so we sat and had a chat and decided to sell it."

Real to appeal against Raul ban

Real Madrid say they will appeal against a UEFA decision to suspend and fine Raul for a handball goal against Leeds United, saying the sanction was a stain upon the player's reputation.

Raul scored Real's opener in their 3-2 Champions League win last week Tuesday by turning a free-kick into the Leeds net with his hand.

Although he claimed afterwards the goal was legitimate, video evidence proved he used his hand to score. UEFA's disciplinary board on Friday banned him for one game and fined him 20,000Swiss francs (8,200 pounds) — something that could set a dangerous precedent according to Real sporting director Jorge Valdano.

"I hope this is not a precedent that could leave everything open to interpretation, with matches refereed twice," Valdano said at a hastily-arranged news conference at the Bernabeu last week. "This is a surprise to the club and we do not agree with the sanction.

"If the referee had thought Raul had put the ball in the net using his hand the maximum sanction he would have received would be a yellow card — never a one-match ban.

Raul

"The one-match ban is not important to us but this stain on the reputation of a player whose record is immaculate.

"We will appeal against this, while at the same time maintaining all due respect towards UEFA.

"Raul has throughout his career been an example of sportsmanship. "His goal was not a premeditated act. It was instinctive.

"Footballers are not brought up to say to the referee, 'Oh, I'm sorry, that goal I just scored was with my hand.'" Valdano said Real had not been given details of the case against Raul but hit out strongly at suggestions in the Spanish media that Raul had admitted to the referee or a UEFA delegate that he had used his hand.

Beckenbauer blasts off-form Bayern

Bayern Munich chairman Franz Beckenbauer blasted his side for last week's 3-0 Champions League capitulation against Olympique Lyon.

"We played like we used to 30 years ago," he said. "That was pure old man's football."

Beckenbauer

"We were without nerve, courage or discipline. That was not Real Madrid, Barcelona or Manchester United. That was Lyon and we were taught a lesson. "We invited our opponents to shoot goals. The first goal was bad, the second a catastrophe.

"If we continue to play like that then the trophies will not come to Munich. They will be celebrating elsewhere."

Bayern need only one point from their final match against Arsenal to be certain of qualifying for the last eight.

But the former World Cup-winning captain and coach said the three-times European champions would have to pull up their socks before they faced Arsene Wenger's side.

"That will be really tough. They are very fast and we saw our not-so-speedy defence in Lyon," said Beckenbauer.

"We stood 14 metres away from every man and Elber didn't have a centimetre of space."

ABSW

WORLD

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

The terrible record of Italian teams in Europe continued and only a small miracle this week from AC Milan against Deportivo La Coruna can save a total oblivion from Italian teams from European competition.

Galatasaray again proved to be a nightmare for AC Milan. After eliminating them last year in the Champions League, they beat them again 2-0 in Istanbul last week.

AC Milan in the Champions League is the last hope for an Italian team to advance further in that competition.

It is interesting to analyse perhaps why Italian teams performed so poorly in Europe but the fact that they are forced to play so much football, between domestic and international competitions, is surely a major factor.

Even the format of the Champions League leaves a lot to be desired with far too many teams getting 'second chances' and the tournament itself is

too long. UEFA really need to return to a format similar to the old Champions Cup whereby it was home and away and elimination for the loser.

However, one suspects that television revenue plays a major part and therefore nothing will change and this albatross of a tournament will continue.

With the extensive coverage of Italian football on pay-tv these days one may wonder about the value of SBS's coverage of Italian football on Sunday mornings.

However, lots of parts of Australia are without pay-tv and a lot o people simply don't have it. With this in mind therefore the SBS coverage assumes greater importance.

Two points that should be made. Firstly, why have the programme almost a week late? Surely an earlier timeslot during the week would be more appropriate.

And, secondly, why don't they show a replay of all goals? Glance away for a second and they're gone. I guess that is why VCRs were invented over 20 years ago!

Antonio Cassano is an 18-year old with a bright future. He will now be paid as much as Alessandro Del Piero and this is only his first season in the Serie A.

Cassano is the 'wonder boy' of Bari who has been signed by Roma until 2006. However, with the new FIFA/UEFA transfer system to be brought in, one wonders if Roma will actually hold onto him until then. Even under the current transfer system, it would be hard to hold onto him.

Christian Vieri a few years back was signed by Juventus on a long-term deal but after just one season he was sold to Atletico Madrid. One year there and he was back in Italy on a long-term deal with Lazio.

Incredibly after only one year in Rome he moved to Inter where he is currently into his second year of a five-year deal.

So Cassano may never really play for Roma until 2006 because often the contract is not worth the paper it is written on. The idea of Cassano signing for Roma is really quite staggering for someone so young.

His contract is an 'incentive contract' with regular increments each season and, if all reports are true, then he will roughly match the pay packet of Del Piero.

Cassano is an excellent striker who has played very well for Bari but his opportunities next year at Roma may be more limited.

At this stage Gabriel Batistuta is still an excellent player and arguably the best striker in the world. Cassano is obviously seen as an investment in the future and someone who may eventually take over from the legendary Argentinian.

Furthermore, Roma still have players such as Vincenzo Montella and Francesco Totti so Cassano will still have to wait around a bit probably before he can really establish at Roma.

ITALIAN SERIE A

BOLOGNA 2 LAZIO 0

Lazio's first league defeat since Dino Zoff took over as coach on January 9 brought their remarkable run of six consecutive away victories to an end.

The dismissal of Portuguese centre-back Fernando Couto for elbowing an opponent in the 44th minute gave Bologna, already one goal in front, the upper hand before former Lazio talisman Giuseppe Signori killed his old club off with his eighth of the season. Lazio now trail leaders Roma by 11 points.

INTER MILAN 2 VERONA 0

A vital win for Inter after their defeat at Roma last weekend. Christian Vieri scored the opener from the penalty spot after he was tugged down by former Inter keeper Fabrizio Ferron.

Turk Hakan Sukur added the second for an Inter side who hit the woodwork twice. Verona had Alessandro Mazzola sent off en route to their seventh consecutive defeat on the road.

JUVENTUS 1 REGGINA 0

A header by Igor Tudor from a Zinedine Zidane cross on the half hour was enough to give Juve their seventh consecutive home win to keep them within sight of leaders Roma.

Carlo Ancelotti's side were otherwise below par and Reggina almost stole an equaliser with a shot against the crossbar.

Napoli's defensive ace, Hernan Hamid (right) stops a Vicenza striker.

LECCE 2 UDINESE 1

Udinese took the lead through a typical towering header from Argentine striker Roberto Carlos Sosa before Swede Klas Ingesson equalised for the southerners with his first goal since his return to Serie A from France.

Cristiano Lucarelli scored Lecce's winner from the spot. His 13 goals this season have accounted for a remarkable 17 of Lecce's 29 league points.

Juventus' midfielder, Edgar Davids screams after being fouled by a Reggina player.

PERUGIA 2 FIORENTINA 2

Fiorentina fought back from 2-0 down to give Roberto Mancini a point from his first ever match as coach.

Enrico Chiesa's 56th minute volley and a header from Ivory Coast defender Saliou Lassissi sparked the Florentine recovery before their keeper Francesco Toldo saved a late penalty from Luca Saudati.

Fiorentina, third in mid-January, are now 11th.

AS ROMA 3 BRESCIA 1

Roma squandered a hatful of chances before Vincenzo Montella sealed a club record seventh consecutive league victory with two late goals, the second a brilliant individual effort in wich he turned his marker and fired a shot high into the Brescia net from a tight angle.

Montella has now scored five in three matches and Roma remain six points clear at the top.

ATALANTA 1 AC MILAN 1

A superb overhead kick from Maurizio Ganz gave Atalanta a 1-1 draw against his former club, who led for most of the match thanks to a Stefano Lorenzi own goal.

Milan, who face Deportivo Coruna for a place in the last eight of the Champions League on Tuesday, looked tense and captain Paolo Maldini had a public bust-up with midfielder Zvonimir Boban before the final whistle.

PARMA 4 BARI 0

Parma's Marco Di Vaio netted all four of his side's goals in a 4-0 home victory over bottom club Bari that keeps them firmly in fourth place, albeit 18 points adrift of Roma.

Di Vaio completed a first half hat-trick between the 13th and 44th minutes then added a fourth in the 66th. The Parma striker now has nine for the season.

Bari had no answer for their high flying opponents and are now firmly entrenched in the relegation zone.

VICENZA 2 NAPOLI 0

Goals from the highly-rated Luca Toni and substitute Fabio Firmani gave Vicenza a vital and deserved win which allowed them to leapfrog over relegation rivals Napoli.

The home side also hit the post in the second half.

Bologna	2	Lazio	0
Inter Milan	2	Verona	0
Juventus	1	Reggina	0
Lecce	2	Udinese	1
Parma	4	Bari	0
Perugia	2	Fiorentina	2
AS Roma	3	Brescia	1
Vicenza	2	Napoli	0
Atalanta	1	AC Milan	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. AS Roma	**22**	**17**	**3**	**2**	**44**	**17**	**54**
2. Juventus	22	14	6	2	39	15	48
3. Lazio	22	13	4	5	40	25	43
4. Parma	22	10	6	6	35	20	36
5. Atalanta	22	8	9	5	25	19	33
6. Inter Milan	22	8	7	7	27	25	31
7. Bologna	22	9	4	9	28	28	31
8. AC Milan	22	7	9	6	33	35	30
9. Perugia	22	8	6	8	28	30	30
10. Lecce	22	7	8	7	28	33	29
11. Fiorentina	22	6	10	6	36	32	28
12. Udinese	22	9	1	12	35	37	28
13. Vicenza	22	6	5	11	22	33	23
14. Brescia	22	4	9	9	25	32	21
15. Napoli	22	5	6	11	23	35	21
16. Verona	22	5	6	11	27	41	21
17. Reggina	22	5	3	14	17	36	18
18. Bari	22	4	4	14	18	37	16

WORLD

FA CUP QUARTER-FINALS

ARSENAL 3 BLACKBURN 0

Both teams rested key players ahead of big games next week and this match was settled in the first half hour.

Silvain Wiltord's sixth goal in four FA Cup games after just 75 seconds had Arsenal ahead, the Frenchman turning in a low Robert Pires cross.

Tony Adams headed home an Ashley Cole corner four minutes later to make it 2-0 and the game was effectively over after 36 minutes when Pires brought down a superb Wiltord pass before shooting home.

Blackburn had lost just once in their last 19 games in their charge to promotion but struggled to keep pace and their best chance came even before Arsenal had scored when Marcus Bent headed over the bar.

Jason McAteer had a second half effort ruled out for handball.

Arsenal's Dennis Bergkamp (right) fights for possesion with Blackburn Rovers midfielder Scott Flintcroft during their FA Cup Quarter Final clash.

LEICESTER 1 WYCOMBE 2

Second Division Wycombe held their own for the first half and then stunned their premier league hosts five minutes after the break when defender Paul McCarthy headed in a long free kick by Steve Brown.

Leicester are sixth in the Premier League while Wycombe, missing six injured forward players, are 16th in the second division and had never previously gone beyond the third round.

Leicester equalised in the 68th minute when substitute Darren Eadie crossed for Muzzy Izzet to score from close range.

But Roy Essandoh headed the winner deep into injury time Leicester boss Peter Taylor had no excuses for his team's failure and even conceded that Wycombe had been denied a certain penalty. "I'm staggered we played so badly," he said afterwards.

"We've let ourselves down today. It's a nightmare I never ever thought would happen but it has happened and there will be few sorry faces on Monday and a few long lie-ins on Sunday because our players will not want to get up to read tomorrow's headlines."

LIVERPOOL 4 TRANMERE 2

Liverpool held off a strong second-half fightback by first division Tranmere Rovers to keep their cup treble dreams alive.

Tranmere, bottom of the first division, were outclassed in the first half as goals by Danny Murphy and Michael Owen gave Liverpool a 2-0 lead.

Steve Yates pulled one back with a header a minute after the re-start and Steven Gerrard headed Liverpool 3-1 ahead in the 52nd minute, only for Wayne Allison to score with his first touch seconds after coming on as a substitute to make it 3-2.

Tranmere pressed forward for the equaliser but were caught at the back and Robbie Fowler secured the win with a penalty.

TOTTENHAM 3 WEST HAM 2

Two goals for Serhiy Rebrov helped Tottenham to a well-deserved win on a soaking Upton Park pitch.

A sharp volley by the Ukrainian had Spurs ahead after 31 minutes but West Ham equalised with a free kick by veteran defender Stuart Pearce just before haltime.

Rebrov restored Spurs' lead and Gary Doherty made it 3-1 after 61 minutes. West Ham hit back through Svetoslav Todorov to set up a tense finale but Spurs held out.

SEMI-FINAL DRAW

Arsenal v Tottenham

Wycombe v Liverpool

(Matches to be played on April 7-8, venues to be decided)

Roy Essandoh celebrating his late winner that took Wycombe into their first-ever FA Cup Semi-final.

PREMIER LEAGUE

ASTON VILLA 2 IPSWICH TOWN 1

Villa won only their second league game in 10 thanks to two goals by Julian Joachim.

Ipswich went ahead after 30 minutes when Alun Armstong held off a challenge from Gareth Southgate and saw the ball spin over the line.

Joachim levelled for Villa in the 52nd minute, skipping through a series of tackles before knocking the ball in and then hit the winner 19 minutes from time.

MURPHY'S LAW

By Julian Murphy

World footballing history is littered with incidents of talented players who fail to live up to their potential. Some fall by the wayside when they are still teenagers, others burst quickly onto the scene before disappearing just as rapidy and others experience a slow, and often painful, fall from grace.

In England, there are two players from recent times that spring to mind. Manchester United wizard and part-time playboy, George Best, and Everton midfielder and part-time boofhead, Paul Gascoigne.

Another player who can now be added to the list is the 30 year-old Stan Collymore who decided to retire from the game last week. Collymore never reached the heights of either Best or Gascoigne, but by the way he often carried himself you would have thought that he had. Therein lay his problem.

Collymore started his league career with a handful of appearances on the wing for Crystal Palace in the early 90ís. Not for the first time Palace let a talented young player slip away, and Collymore left for Southend where he was transformed into a productive goal scorer. Eighteen goals in 33 games secured Collymore a move to First Division Nottingham Forest in 1993 and he led the club to promotion with a further 24 goals.

The step up to the Premiership suited both Collymoreís football and ego and his scoring catapulted Forest to a league position in 1994/95. By 1995 Stan was very much a man in demand. He was rewarded for his impressive performances with England caps against Brazil and Japan. There werenít many football fans that didn't believe it was the start of a lengthy international career.

It was also around this time that Alex Ferguson expressed a desire to take Collymore to Old Trafford, but opted for Newcastle Unitedís Andy (now Andrew to you) Cole instead.

The failure to secure a move transfer to Manchester United probably didn't concern Stan too much as there were plenty of other big clubs lining up for his services. Liverpool duly stepped in with a big money deal.

Collymore started reasonably well on Merseyside and his partnership with Robbie Fowler had the potential to be the best in the Premiership. However, Collymore had always had a reputation for being difficult off the field and this started to cause him problems at Liverpool. No longer a big fish in a small pond, Collymore struggled to get on with his new team-mates and soon his relationship with manager Roy Evans became strained.

Evans was unimpressed with Stan's refusal to relocate closer to Anfield and things soured further when his form on the pitch began to dip. Before long he was stuck on the bench watching Czech international Patrik Berger dashing around in his position. Stan's bottom lip began to curl downwards quite noticeably.

Stan probably thought a move to Aston Villa would allow him to strut his stuff again, but he hadnít counted upon John Gregory. The Villa boss had earned a reputation as a firm disciplinarian, as had Stan for his dislike of training.

Collymore endured a couple of miserable seasons at Villa where his flashes of brilliance became less commonplace. By 1999 he had admitted that he was suffering from depression and was then unable to rediscover his form on a loan spell at Fulham.

In early 2000 Leicester City stepped in as potential saviours and Collymore showed his appreciation with a hat-trick in his home debut against Sunderland.

Unfortunately, he broke his leg soon afterwards and his renaissance was put on hold. When he returned he appeared surlier than before and it wasnít long before he was shipped off to Bradford City.

If his other moves had hinted that Collymore's career was in decline, this one screamed that it was in free-fall. His arrival at Valley Parade was spectacular as he scored with a bicycle-kick against fierce rivals Leeds, but it proved to be a false dawn. It was to be the only memory he would leave Bantam fans.

When Jim Jefferies got the top job Bradford he did as Collymore's three previous managers had. He got rid of him. A couple of months spent warming the bench at Spanish club Oviedo was enough to convince Collymore that he wanted to open a trendy clothes shop in London.

Whilst Collymore is not the first talented footballer to fail to live up to his potential, his undoubted ability makes it all the more tragic. As does the fact that his disappearance from the limelight will prevent us from following the continuing soap opera that is Stan Collymore.

WORLD

FIFA

World Rankings

(Valid until March 14)

1	Brazil	818	70	Zimbabwe	492	139	St Lucia	274
2	France	799	71	Kuwait	490	140=	Korea DPR	265
3	Argentina	769	72	Macedonia FYR	487	140=	Luxemburg	265
4	Italy	740	73	Bosnia-Herz	485	142	Tanzania	261
5	Czech Republic	739	74	Uzbekistan	482	143	Grenada	250
6	Portugal	736	75	**AUSTRALIA**	480	144=	Bangladesh	244
7	Spain	732	76	Albania	479	144=	Antigua and Barbuda	244
8	Netherlands	706	77	China PR	477	146=	Andorra	242
9	Yugoslavia	705	78=	Cuba	474	146=	St Kitts & Nevis	242
10	Paraguay	704	78=	Guinea	474	148	Liechtenstein	241
11	Germany	703	80	Algeria	471	149	Benin	239
12	Mexico	688	81	Iraq	470	150	Botswana	234
13	Romania	681	82	Togo	468	151	Sri Lanka	226
14=	Norway	673	83	Liberia	466	152	Dominica	221
14=	Colombia	673	84	El Salvador	459	153	Bermuda	218
16	United States	657	85	Haiti	458	154=	Maldives	215
17	England	655	86	Namibia	456	154=	Gambia	215
18	Croatia	654	87	Lithuania	455	156	Cape Verde Is	209
19	South Africa	633	88	Congo	453	157	Dominican Rep	206
20	Russia	632	89	Senegal	450	158	Eritrea	196
21	Slovakia	629	90	New Zealand	447	159	Cayman Islands	193
22	Chile	628	91	Gabon	441	160	Yemen	190
23	Denmark	624	92	Armenia	440	161	Mauritania	188
24	Sweden	622	93=	Latvia	436	162	Chinese Taipei	186
25	Scotland	610	93=	Northern Ireland	436	163	Kyrgyzstan	175
26	Tunisia	609	95	Moldova	429	164	Chad	173
27	Belgium	608	96=	Indonesia	426	164	Surinam	173
28	Morocco	606	96=	Belarus	426	166	Laos	170
29	Trinidad & Tobago		98	Mali	423	167	British Virgin Is.	169
30	Turkey	597	99	Vietnam SR	419	168	Nepal	166
31	Ireland Republic	594	100	Qatar	418	169	Vanuatu	163
32	Saudi Arabia	591	101	Singapore	414	170=	San Marino	158
33=	Uruguay	589	102	Syria	411	170=	Cambodia	158
33=	Egypt	589	103	Uganda	409	172	Cook Islands	156
35	Iran	587	104=	Jordan	407	173	Palestine	152
36=	Ukraine	585	104=	Kenya	407	174	Samoa	139
36=	Slovenia	585	106	Barbados	406	175	Netherlands Ant	134
38	Poland	584	107	Oman	393	176	Central Afr Rep.	127
39	Israel	582	108	Malaysia	389	177	Guinea-Bissau	126
40=	Japan	581	109	Wales	385	178	Bahamas	117
40=	Cameroon	581	110	Lebanon	382	179=	Philippines	115
42	Korea Republic	579	111	Venezuela	376	179=	Macao	115
43	Greece	572	112=	Malawi	364	179=	Sao Tome e Principe	115
44	Austria	570	112=	Madagascar	364	182	Niger	107
45	Jamaica	559	114	Mozambique	361	183	Guyana	105
46	Peru	558	115	Libya	351	184	Aruba	100
47	Honduras	557	116	Azerbaijan	348	185	Tonga	98
48=	Cote d' Ivoire	554	117	Mauritius	343	186	Belize	93
48=	Hungary	554	118	Faroe Islands	334	187	Eq Guinea	90
50	Zambia	553	119	Malta	324	188	Seychelles	83
51	Nigeria	546	120	Kazakhstan	322	189	Djibouti	80
52=	Bulgaria	544	121	Panama	318	190	Pakistan	72
52=	Iceland	544	122	India	314	191	Nicaragua	71
54=	Ecuador	542	123	Hong Kong	310	192	PNG	65
54=	Angola	542	124	Myanmar	307	193	Darussalam	64
56	Costa Rica	536	125	Burundi	306	194	Somalia	59
57	Guatemala	532	126	Turkmenistan	304	195	Puerto Rico	53
58=	Ghana	529	127=	Swaziland	302	196	Mongolia	52
58=	Switzerland	529	127=	St Vincent/Gr	302	197	Anguilla	35
60	Finland	528	129=	Bahrain	299	198	US Virgin Islands	33
61	Thailand	521	129=	Rwanda	299	199	Guam	29
62	Cyprus	519	131	Sierra Leone	290	200	Turks and Caicos Islands	22
63	Canada	515	132=	Solomon Islands	288	201	Bhutan	15
64	United Arab Emirates		132=	Lesotho	288	202	Montserrat	11
65	Bolivia	507	132=	Fiji	288	203	American Samoa	8
66	Georgia	506	135=	Sudan	287			
67	Estonia	498	135=	Tahiti	287			
68	Burkina Faso	497	137	Ethiopia	282			
69	Congo DR	495	138	Tajikistan	281			

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

UEFA CUP Q-FINALS

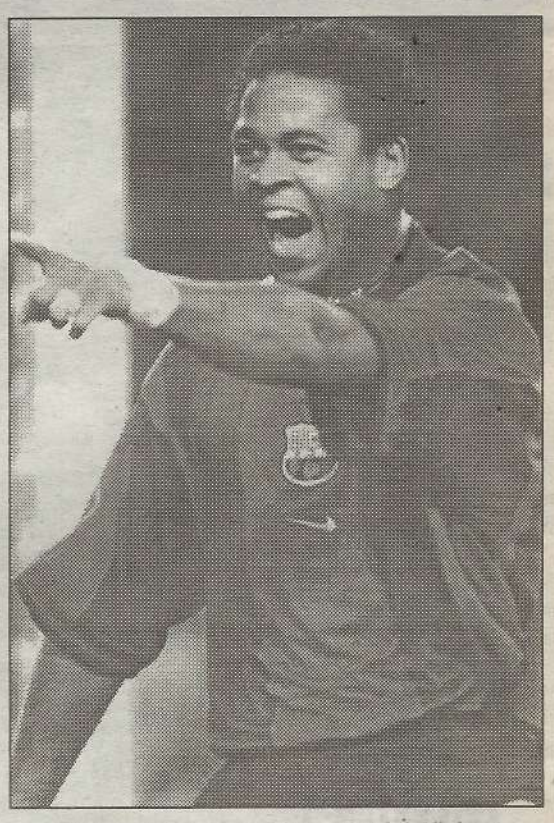
Celta hopeful despite Kluivert brace

Barcelona had to be content with a meagre 2-1 victory over 10-man Celta Vigo last week as the underdogs in the all-Spanish clash battled back from two goals down to earn a UEFA Cup lifeline.

Barca took the lead in the quarter-final first leg at the Nou Camp on 13 minutes through Patrick Kluivert. Boudewijn Zenden got clear of the Celta defence down the right and pulled back for his fellow Dutchman to stroke in.

Celta's hopes of getting back into the tie took a severe blow on 23 minutes as midfielder Vagner, who had been booked a minute earlier for a foul on Marc Overmars, scythed into Pep Guardiola and was ordered off by referee Graham Barber.

But although Kluivert added a second early in the second half, Celta came back with a Pablo Coira strike on 69 minutes to keep their hopes alive for the second leg in Balaidos this week.



Barcelona's two-goal hero, Patrick Kluivert celebrates his first strike against Celta Vigo.

Liverpool hold Porto

Porto were held to a 0-0 draw by a disciplined Liverpool side in an evenly-contested UEFA Cup quarter-final first leg.

Porto prevented Liverpool from settling into their usual passing game and forced several corners but had few real scoring chances at the Antas stadium.

The result leaves former European champions Liverpool well placed for the return leg at Anfield this Thursday, although French coach Gerard Houllier was quick to stamp on any overconfidence.

"They are a dangerous team. They have the quality to win away from home," Gerard Houllier told a news conference.

Things could have been different if Porto striker Jesus Pena had done better when he was left unmarked inside the box, but could only steer his shot wide in injury time.

Minutes earlier, fellow Brazilian Deco Sousa nearly fooled Liverpool's Dutch goalkeeper Sander Westerveld with a shot from outside the area wich went just wide.

In the first half, midfielder Carlos Chainho shot powerfully from the edge of the box but Westerveld pulled off a fine save.

But these were rare moments of danger for the generally rock-solid Liverpool defence.

At the other end, Liverpool's Robbie Fowler missed the visitor's best opportunity to open the scoring in the 21st minute when he himself unmarked after a goalmouth scramble but sent his shot over the bar.

Danny Murphy sent a free-kick just inches over the Porto blow in the closing minutes.

Liverpool's Michael Owen glides towards Porto's goalmouth.

1ST LEG RESULTS

Barcelona (Spain) **2 Celta Vigo** (Spain) **1**
Scorers: Barcelona - Patrick Kluviert 13, 56
Celta Vigo - Pablo Coira 69

Alaves (Spain) **3 Rayo Vallecano** (Spain) **0**
Scorers: Jorge Azkoitia 30, Dan Eggen 79, Jurica Vucko 80

Porto (Portugal) **0 Liverpool** (England) **0**

Kaiserslautern (Germany) **1 PSV Eindhoven** (Netherlands) **0**
Scorer: Harry Koch 31pen

Second legs to be played on Thursday, March 15.

Kaiser's goalie frustrate PSV

A classy performance by fledgling goalkeeper Roman Weidenfeller helped Kaiserslautern to a 1-0 victory over PSV Eindhoven in the first leg of their UEFA Cup quarter-final on Thursday.

The only goal of an often scrappy game was scored by Harry Koch from the penalty spot.

But it was a series of thrilling saves by the 20-year-old reserve goalkeeper which ensured Kaiserslautern head to Eindhoven this Thursday with a slim advantage.

Koch scored with a 31st minute spot-kick after English referee Graham Poll penalised Jan Heintze for trying to hold back Olaf Marschall.

"We're going there and we want to score goals. That's our target — score a goal as quickly as possible," coach Andreas Brehme said afterwards.

"We owe our victory to this excellent goalkeeper Roman Weidenfeller," Brehme added.

Weidenfeller was a last-minute choice after first choice Georg Koch, a former PSV Eindhoven player, was declared injured late in the day.

"The way he plucked those balls out of the air, I'm proud of him," Basler said.

The first chance of the game fell to the 15-time Dutch champions when Dennis Rommedahl crossed for Johannes de Jong, but the goalkeeper held his own.

He again stopped Andre Ooijer and de Jong just before the end of the first half.

Eindhoven had more of the ball in the second half but lacked the firepower to make the most of their possession.

WORLD

WORLD RESULTS ... WORLD RESULTS ...

FRENCH CUP

LOWLY REIMS CAUSE MAJOR CUP UPSET

Stade Reims revived memories of their golden era by beating first division Bastia 1-0 to reach the quarter-finals of the French Cup last week.

The team from the capital of Champagne, now in the third division, won thanks to a goal by David Ducourtioux seconds before the break.

Their victory was the main surprise of a fourth round which saw holders Nantes easily dismiss fifth division Carcassonne 2-0 and Olympique Lyon struggle to beat amateurs Fontenay on penalties.

Ducourtioux, a former Bastia player, scored from a cross by Jeremy Denquin in the 44th minute.

The young Reims side hung on to their lead despite constant pressure by the Corsicans in the second half.

Nantes' striker, Stephanne Guy (left) challenges a Carcassonne player.

Banners in the stands read: "The Great Reims team is back", a tribute to the heyday of the Champagne club who lost in the European Cup final to Real Madrid in 1956 and 1959.

Reims, who won the last of their two French Cups in 1958, sank without trace after being relegated from the first division in 1979.

Now they are among a number of lower-ranked teams hoping to emulate amateurs Calais, who were beaten in last year's Cup final by Nantes.

"We deserved it. It's no robbbery. My team did what they had to do," said coach Marc Collat.

Nantes remained on course for their third successive Cup triumph by beating Carcassonne thanks to goals by Marama Vahirua and Hassan Mahamada.

The game was tarnished by a brawl shortly before the break which led to Nantes' Nicolas Laspalles and Carcassonne's Noredine Chamlal being dismissed.

Amateurs Fontenay forced Olympique Lyon to fight to the bitter end before going out 5-4 on penalties.

Fontenay, who beat first division Sedan in the previous round, opened the scoring through Johann Lion in the 63rd minute.

But Sidney Govou, who scored twice in Lyon's 3-0 Champions League victory over Bayern Munich on Tuesday, saved his team by equalising four minutes from time.

Christophe Delmotte gave Lyon the lead with a lob five minutes into extra time but Fontenay equalised in the last minute when Jeremie Brechet turned a Sebastien Ducourneau cross into his own net.

Experience paid off in the penalty shoot-out with no Lyon player missing.

RESULTS

Reims (III)	1	Bastia	0
Carcassonne (V	0	Nantes	3
Vannes (IV)	1	AJ Auxerre	2
Amiens (III)	0	Le Mans (II)	0
(Amiens win 4-2 on penalties)			
Fontenay (IV)	2	Olympique Lyon	2
(Lyon win 5-4 on penalties)			
Troyes	1	Wasquehal (II)	0
Chateauroux (II)	0	Grenoble (III)	2
Valence (III)	0	Strasbourg	2

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

BAYERN BOUNCE BACK

It was not the most convincing of victories over modest east German opposition,but it was enough to end a nightmare losing streak and edge Bayern back to the top of the table by a point over Dortmund.

Mehmet Scholl, arguably the only player to emerge with much credit from last week's 3-0 Champions' League drubbing at Olympique Lyon, settled their nerves in the 24th minute, latching on to a beautiful ball from France's Bixente Lizarazu.

Captain Stefan Effenberg made it 2-0 seven minutes before halftime.

Hertha improved their chances of securing their goal of a Champions' League place with an injury-time strike from Pal Dardai. He fired home from 18 metres after Hansa Rostock failed to clear properly from a goalmouth scramble.

Their Swedish midfielder Marcus Lantz was sent off for dissent after Hertha's winner.

Leading 2-0 after half an hour, bottom-placed Bochum's hopes of avoiding relegation rose. To go on and lose at home to a side with only eight men must now condemn them to the drop. Things looked bleak for Cologne when they lost Moses Sichone for foul play as they trailed 2-0, yet Georgian striker Archil Arweladse brought them back into the game almost immediately and Bochum's Zdravko Drincic evened the sides up by being sent off.

After the break Markus Kreuz equalised and captain Dirk Lottner secured the points for Cologne in the 79th minute.

Borussia Dortmund overtook champions Bayern Munich last week with a 6-1 crushing of Eintracht Frankfurt. But they have yet to win away in 2001 and the way they gave up a 2-0 lead should have coach Matthias Sammer worried.

Brazilian Dede gave the 1996 champions the lead on 19 minutes with a blistering effort from 25 metres. Two minutes before

Bayern Munich striker, Giovanne Elber (left) evades the tackles of a Cottbus defender.

halftime record Czech signing Tomas Rosicky neatly set up Giuseppe Reina to make it 2-0. But Juergen Kohler fouled Tobias Willi in the box, allowing Adel Sellimi to get it back to 2-1 from the spot just before the break. Freiburg came out with new confidence and Sellimi grabbed the equaliser after 58 minutes.

Leverkusen broke a three-game losing streak with a convincing display of finishing to run out 3-0 winners over Werder Bremen and revive their championship hopes.

Kaiserslautern 3 TSV 1860 Munich 2, Hamburg SV 2 VfB Stuttgart 2, Hertha Berlin 1 Hansa Rostock 0, VfL Bochum 2 Cologne 3, VfL Wolfsburg 6 SpVgg Unterhaching 1, SC Freiburg 2 Borussia Dortmund 2, Bayern Munich 2 Energie Cottbus 0, Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Schalke 04 0, Bayer Leverkusen 3 Werder Bremen 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Bayern Munich	25	14	4	7	49	28	46
2. B. Dortmund	25	13	6	6	43	31	45
3. B. Leverkusen	25	13	4	8	43	29	43
4. Hertha Berlin	25	14	1	10	47	41	43
5. Kaiserslautern	25	13	4	8	37	32	43
6. Schalke 04	25	12	6	7	43	26	42
7. Werder Bremen	25	10	7	8	35	36	37
8. Cologne	25	10	6	9	44	39	36
9. VfL Wolfsburg	25	9	8	8	49	34	35
10. SC Freiburg	25	9	8	8	33	29	35
11. 860 Munich	25	9	7	10	33	40	34
12. Hansa Rostock	25	9	4	12	25	37	31
13. Hamburg SV	25	9	4	12	48	47	31
14. E. Frankfurt	25	8	4	13	30	46	28
15. Unterhaching	25	7	6	12	25	44	27
16. E. Cottbus	25	8	2	15	29	43	26
17. VfB Stuttgart	25	6	8	11	35	40	26
18. VfL Bochum	25	5	5	15	22	48	20

PRIMERA LIGA

MADRID HIT SOCIEDAD FOR FOUR

Walter Padiani celebrates his goal for Deportivo La Coruna.

Real Madrid re-established their five-point lead at the top of the Spanish first division with a 4-0 demolition of lowly Real Sociedad on Sunday.

A first half double from Fernando Morientes, an 82nd minute header by Raul and a neat strike from Steve McManaman gave the European champions a comfortable win.

Former Real Madrid coach John Toshack made an unhappy return to the Bernabeu as he saw his men outclassed by a Real Madrid side led by the superb Luis Figo.

The European Player of the Year supplied three of the four goals as he ran the visitors' defence ragged.

The first goal came after Figo made a good run on the right, spinning in a cross towards the waiting Fernando Morientes. The centre-forward directed a fine header into the far corner beyond the reach of keeper Alberto to make it 1-0.

Relegation candidates Real Sociedad had little to offer and looked desperately short of firepower up front, while Real continued to launch a succession of attacks via Figo.

The Portuguese international helped to make it two when he surged forward once more, cut a pass back to McManaman, who saw his fierce shot parried by Alberto. Morientes was on hand to slot in the rebound and make it 2-0. Raul dived in from a Figo free-kick to make it 3-0.

While McManaman completed the rout with a fine goal in the 87th minute. He latched on to a through ball from Pedro Munitis and chipped over Alberto with the outside of his foot to complete a comfortable win.

UEFA Cup rivals Alaves and Rayo Vallecano were involved in athrilling game as they met for the second of their three encounters in eight days. Alaves won 3-0 in the first leg of their UEFA Cup quarter-final on Thursday and once more it was the Basque side who emerged on top as they achieved a 4-2 win to give themselves a further boost ahead of next week's second leg.

Meanwhile, Valencia are third following their 1-0 triumph over Osasuna on Saturday, and Racing Santander clawed themselves off the bottom at Osasuna's expense with a deserved 2-1 win over Las Palmas.

Alaves 4 Rayo Vallecano 2, Barcelona 1 Real Mallorca 1, Malaga 2 Real Zaragoza 0, Racing Santander 2 Las Palmas 1, Real Madrid 4 Real Sociedad 0, Real Oviedo 2 Espanyol 2, Valladolid 1 Celta Vigo 2, Athletic Bilbao 1 Villarreal 1, Deportivo Coruna 4 Numancia 1, Valencia 1 Osasuna 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Real Madrid	26	17	5	4	60	29	56
2. Dep. Coruna	26	15	6	5	52	29	51
3. Valencia	26	14	7	5	41	18	49
4. Barcelona	26	13	6	7	54	37	45
5. Real Mallorca	26	11	9	6	36	33	42
6. Villarreal	26	11	6	9	34	30	39
7. Alaves	26	11	5	10	38	33	38
8. Malaga	26	11	4	11	41	39	37
9. Ath. Bilbao	26	9	8	9	34	37	35
10. Celta Vigo	26	9	8	9	32	36	35
11. R. Vallecano	26	8	10	8	45	44	34
12. Espanyol	26	9	6	11	33	30	33
13. Valladolid	26	7	11	8	30	31	32
14. Las Palmas	26	9	5	12	26	43	32
15. Zaragoza	26	7	10	9	36	37	31
16. Oviedo	26	8	4	14	33	48	28
17. Numancia	26	7	5	14	26	45	26
18. Real Sociedad	26	6	6	14	28	54	24
19. Racing Sant.	26	6	5	15	30	43	23
20. Osasuna	26	5	8	13	27	40	23

WORLD LEAGUES

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

Groningen 3 Ajax Amsterdam 3, Willem II Tilburg 3 Feyenoord 1, Utrecht 0 Vitesse Arnhem 0, Fortuna Sittard 2 RBC Roosendaal 1, Twente Enschede 1 NEC Nijmegen 1, AZ Alkmaar 1 RKC Waalwijk 3, Roda JC Kerkrade 1 NAC Breda 0, Graafschap Doetinchem 0 Heerenveen 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. PSV Eindhoven	24	17	6	1	49	14	57
2. Feyenoord	24	17	2	5	49	22	53
3. Ajax	24	14	5	5	60	30	47
4. Roda JC	24	12	5	7	42	29	41
5. Waalwijk	24	11	8	5	31	19	41
6. Vitesse Arnhem	24	11	7	6	41	36	40
7. Willem II	24	10	7	7	43	34	37
8. Utrecht	23	10	5	8	39	34	35
9. NEC Nijmegen	24	6	13	5	31	30	31
10. Heerenveen	23	7	9	7	28	29	30
11. NAC Breda	24	8	6	10	29	35	30
12. Twente E.	24	7	8	9	35	43	29
13. Groningen	24	7	7	10	30	36	28
14. AZ Alkmaar	24	7	6	11	35	48	27
15. S. Rotterdam	24	5	5	14	35	47	20
16. Graafschap D.	24	5	2	17	28	52	17
17. Fortuna Sittard	24	3	6	15	16	48	15
18. Roosendaal	24	4	1	19	31	66	13

PORTUGESE FIRST DIVISION

Campomaiorense 4 Estrela Amadora 1, Maritimo 2 Uniao Leiria 1, Farense 1 Beira Mar 2, Alverca 0 Salgueiros 3, Gil Vicente 1 Braga 1, Sporting 2 Aves 0, Belenenses 1 Benfica 0, Pacos Ferreira 0 Boavista 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Boavista	24	15	7	2	43	13	52
2. Sporting	24	15	3	6	45	26	48
3. Porto	22	14	2	6	42	18	44
4. Braga	24	12	8	4	38	28	44
5. Benfica	24	13	5	6	40	25	44
6. Belenenses	24	11	6	7	28	21	39
7. Salgueiros	24	11	3	10	28	35	36
8. Beira Mar	24	10	5	9	29	31	35
9. Pacos Ferreira	24	8	9	7	27	21	33
10. Farense	24	8	8	8	27	30	32
11. Alverca	24	9	4	11	35	39	31
12. Uniao Leiria	24	7	10	7	28	33	31
13. Maritimo	23	8	6	9	23	24	30
14. Vit. Guimaraes	23	5	7	11	28	38	22
15. Camp'rense	24	4	9	11	21	40	21
16. Gil Vicente	24	4	6	14	20	34	18
17. Estrela Amadora	24	3	5	16	21	40	14
18. Aves	24	2	7	15	19	46	13

BELGIUM FIRST DIVISION

Antwerp 1 Ghent 0, Sint-Truiden 1 La Louviere 1, Eendracht Aalst 2 Germinal Beerschot 0, Harelbeke 1 Lierse 0, Mechelen 1 Club Bruges 1, Anderlecht 1 Genk 0, Charleroi 1 Excelsior Mouscron 3, Beveren 0 Lokeren 2, Westerlo 2 Standard Liege 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Anderlecht	25	20	5	0	69	19	65
2. Club Bruges	25	17	7	1	66	19	58
3. Standard Liege	25	12	9	4	57	29	45
4. Ghent	25	12	7	6	46	35	43
5. Westerlo	25	12	6	7	46	37	42
6. Mouscron	25	12	5	8	48	32	41
7. Lokeren	25	11	7	7	38	32	40
8. Germinal. B	25	12	3	10	46	37	39
9. Charleroi	25	11	4	10	40	45	37
10. Lierse	25	10	6	9	35	30	36
11. Beveren	25	8	7	10	22	45	31
12. Antwerp	25	8	4	13	27	35	28
13. Genk	25	7	7	11	29	36	28
14. Aalst	25	6	5	14	25	52	23
15. Harelbeke	25	6	2	17	29	66	20
16. Sint-Truiden	25	4	6	15	24	43	18
17. La Louviere	25	2	9	14	19	45	15
18. Mechelen	25	2	7	16	29	58	13

QANTAS
THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA

National Soccer League

	TOTAL							HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SOUTH MELBOURNE	21	14	5	2	45	15	47	10	8	2	0	27	6	11	6	3	2	18	9
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	22	14	4	4	42	23	46	10	7	2	1	20	9	12	7	2	3	22	14
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	21	13	5	3	51	27	44	11	7	3	1	28	13	10	6	2	2	23	13
PERTH GLORY	22	12	7	3	54	26	43	12	9	2	1	35	9	10	3	5	2	19	17
MARCONI STALLIONS	22	11	5	6	36	29	38	12	7	2	3	24	17	10	4	3	3	12	12
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	22	11	3	8	43	35	36	11	6	2	3	22	14	11	5	1	5	21	21
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	21	10	3	8	35	37	33	10	5	2	3	22	19	11	5	1	5	13	18
PARRAMATTA POWER	22	9	2	11	31	36	29	11	4	1	6	17	20	11	5	1	5	14	16
SYDNEY UNITED	22	8	5	9	32	41	29	10	5	3	2	15	15	12	3	2	7	17	29
CANBERRA COSMOS	22	8	4	10	34	35	28	11	4	2	5	17	16	11	4	2	5	17	19
FOOTBALL KINGZ	22	7	6	9	33	34	27	10	4	3	3	18	12	12	3	3	6	15	22
NORTHERN SPIRIT	22	7	5	10	30	32	26	11	3	3	5	11	12	11	4	2	5	19	21
BRISBANE STRIKERS	21	6	6	9	36	39	24	10	5	3	2	24	15	11	1	3	7	12	24
NEWCASTLE UNITED	22	4	8	10	20	37	20	12	3	2	7	9	20	10	1	6	3	11	14
EASTERN PRIDE	22	4	4	14	26	36	16	11	2	4	4	13	15	12	2	0	10	13	19

Matches played against Carlton will result in all teams being awarded a 3-0 win and 3 competition points

NEWCASTLE UNITED 0
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 1
(Brain 20)

Venue: Marathon Stadium. **Crowd:** 5014. **Referee:** P. Mur.
Cautions: Surjan (NU) 39, Wilson (NU) 59, Zoricich (NU) 80.

Teams: NEWCASTLE UNITED: Catlin, Roberts, Zoricich, McManus, Sprod, Dodd, Wilson (Masi 60), Buonavoglia, Surjan (Juchniewicz 79), Harper, McBreen (Johnson 60).
ADELAIDE FORCE: Cagalj, Lagati, Kovacevic, Bucciarelli (Rees 71), Brain, Veart, Vidmar, Hassell (Terminello 86), Tunbridge, Pantelis, Karlovic.

PERTH GLORY 4
(Mori 10, 70, Despotovski 17pen 89)
NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
(Burgess 8pen)

Venue: Perth Oval. **Crowd:** 11,991. **Referee:** E. Lennie
Cautions: Petkovic (PG) 8, Smith (16), Deans (PG) 54, Cunico (NS) 63, Howson (NS) 76, Cranney (NS) 82.

Teams: PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Harnwell, Naven, Miller, Edwards (Carbone 84), Despotovski, Junior, Mori, Faria, Pryce, Deans.
NORTHERN SPIRIT: Perosh, Cunico, Langdon (Feeney 79), Smith, Enes, Cranney, Burgess, Spencer, Watkins, Howson, Foster.

MARCONI STALLIONS 2
(Gibson 24, Babic 88)
EASTERN PRIDE 1
(Conroy 14)

Venue: Marconi Stadium. **Crowd:** 2,917. **Referee:** M. Breeze.
Cautions: Afkos (MS) 70, Thompson (MS) 71, Radulovic (MS) 81, Puca (EP) 40.

Teams: MARCONI STALLIONS: Aceski, Babic, Costanzo, Maisano (Afkos 60), Farah, Gibson, Renaud, Bell, Trajanovski (Brownlie 73), Zoric (Radulovic 80), Thompson.
EASTERN PRIDE: Galekovic, Fak, Gotis, Deak, Katz (Buhagiar 73), Bell, Puca, Hutchinson, Sekulovski (Motsiopoulos 78), Wearne, Conroy.

BRISBANE STRIKERS 4
(Harris 24, Pilic 40, Foster 68 pen 90)
SYDNEY UNITED 2
(Bilokopic 62, Ageyi 90)

Venue: Ballymore. **Crowd:** 1,643. **Referee:** P. Green.
Cautions: Rech (BS) 71, Genc (SU) 64, Hughes (SU) 67.

Teams: BRISBANE STRIKERS: Baldock, Steffanuto, McKain, Grierson (Hews 75), Foster, Srhoj, Pilic (Dreger 70), McLaren, North, Harris (Buljan 85), Rech.
SYDNEY UNITED: Hughes, Plesa, Bilokapic, Mark, Rastall (Younis 65), Arrante (Deur 58), Pondeljak, Webb, Genc, Menapi, Talevski (Ageyi 78)

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2
(Cervinski 40, Da Costa 67)
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3
(Marusic 10, Augerinos 52, Cardozo 78)

Venue: Knights Stadium. **Crowd:** 4,321. **Referee:** G. Connolly.
Cautions: Collina (SO) 22, Goutzioulis (SO) 33, Kohler (SO) 36.

Teams: MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Acevski, R. Vargas, Porter (Pelikan 86), Kiratzoglou, A. Vargas, Da Costa, Horvat, Cervinski (Ognenovski 82), Marth (Rahjer 62), Jolic, Lapsansky.
SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Bolton, Wilson, Kohler, Baillie, Marusic, Halpin, Goutzioulis (Parisi 68), Collina, Augerinos, Cardozo, Zorbas (Packer 54).

PARRAMATTA POWER 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 3
(Vlahos 10, 47, 54)

Venue: Parramatta Stadium. **Crowd:** 1,732. **Referee:** B. Hugo.
Cautions: Griffiths (PP) 62, Coveny (SM) 79, Anastasiadis.

Teams: PARRAMATTA POWER: Crews, Barrett, Elrich, Tobin, Ardone (Clark 45), Griffiths, Brown (Vrkic 62), Blagojevic, Thompson, Roodenburg, Bennett.
SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis, Durakovic, Panopolous (Clarkson 65), Coveny, Trimboli (Anastasiadis 65), Boutsianis, Vlahos, Lozanovski (Kalogeracos 70), Kisnorbo, Colosimo.

CANBERRA COSMOS 2
(Cortes 82, Angelucci 84)
WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1
(Young 44)

Venue: Bruce Stadium. **Crowd:** 2,593. **Referee:** A. Nardi.
Cautions: Arranz (CC), 31, Hooker (CC), 50, Chipperfield (WW), 53, Miyazawa (CC) 60, Angelucci (CC) 87.
Teams: CANBERRA COSMOS: Smith, Anthopoulos, Popovich, Hagger (Angelucci 53), Milan, Castro, Arranz (Cortes 60), Lyons, Hooker, Miyazawa, Kemp (Ravanello 79).
WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Anastasiadis, Souris, Ceccoli, Cervinski, Horsley, Reid, Petrovski (Stanton 70), Young, Chipperfield, Blake, Middleby.

ROUND 23

FRIDAY MARCH 16

Football Kingz . . . . . vs . . . . . Marconi Stallions
Adelaide City . . . . . vs . . . . . Perth Glory
Wollongong Wolves. . . . . vs . . . . . Newcastle United

SATURDAY MARCH 17

Eastern Pride . . . . . vs . . . . . Melbourne Knights

SUNDAY MARCH 18

South Melbourne . . . . . vs . . . . . Canberra Cosmos
Sydney United . . . . . vs . . . . . Parramatta Power
Sydney Olympic . . . . . vs . . . . . Brisbane Strikers

Northern Spirit - Bye

LEADING GOALSCORERS
After Round Twenty-two

B. DESPOTOVSKI	(Perth Glory)	15
D. MORI	(Perth Glory)	15
B. BURGESS	(Northern Spirit)	14
A. THOMPSON	(Marconi/Carlton)	12
S. PETROVSKI	(W'gong Wolves)	11
S. CHIPPERFIELD	(W'gong Wolves)	10

Player Of The Week

ANDY VLAHOS South Melbourne's potent striker whose unique hat-trick sunk Parramatta Power.

FOOTBALL KINGZ
BYE